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MORE UNCENSORED RECOLLECTIONS

BY THE AUTHOR OF
"UNCENSORED RECOLLECTIONS" AND
"THINGS I SHOULDN'T TELL"

HARPER & BROTHERS PUBLISHERS
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MORE UNCENSORED RECOLLECTIONS

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CHAPTER I

IN consequence of the intimate and somewhat peculiar character of the friendship with which the late King Edward honoured me—I say peculiar because I saw him chiefly abroad when he was naturally more unrestrained than at home—I have often been asked all kinds of odd questions about him. One Anglican prelate I remember was very anxious to learn something definite about the Prince's religious views. Was he orthodox: purely and soundly Anglican: or had his well-known liking for things continental polluted to any appreciable extent that healthy appetite for the doctrinal food provided by Canterbury with which the Sovereign ruler of the British Empire should be endowed? The question —coming as it did from a theologian wholly worldly, a mere courtier and self-seeker, as incapable of ever imparting or enjoying any degree of spirituality as a cow is of waltzing or of understanding Einstein— would have been rather a hard one for a matter-of-fact man to answer. The salons, dinner tables, club rooms, and racecourses where I generally asso-

ciated with the Prince were hardly the most likely places to obtain reliable peeps into his soul-life: to gather together even broken fragments of insight regarding his orthodoxy. But this ignorance of mine regarding the Prince's religious views did not for a moment prevent me from giving to the inquiring prelate some startling information about them. I knew I was addressing a hopelessly barren fig tree heavily laden with leaves to conceal the utter absence of fruit; so I could not resist the temptation to pull the gaitered leg of my episcopal interlocutor. Assuming the anxious aspect of one who had carefully examined the questions and was "appalled" at the result of my investigations, I first obtained the prelate's promise not to divulge the identity of his informer, and then told him that I feared there was a Romeward leaning in the Prince's views.

Now this statement, made as I frankly confess in the first instance purely and simply as a *fumisterie,* very gradually and by slow degrees, as months and years passed, was one that I began seriously to reconsider in the light of its possibly being not wholly devoid of truth. I do not for a moment assert that the Prince studied and approved of the dogmas and doctrines, as Lord Lyons certainly did, of the Roman Church. I doubt indeed if he knew much about such things, and I feel sure he never gave them very serious consideration; but the wide forgiveness and mercy and boundless pity shown on many occasions by that Church, could not but profoundly

appeal to a man who was himself full of sympathy and pity and forgiveness. I doubt if a more tender-hearted man ever lived; everyone came to him with their troubles, no matter of what nature those troubles might be, sure that he would sympathise, pity and give help of every kind and good advice. I doubt if many Father Confessors had more secrets of sorrow confided to them than had the Prince of Wales. "Tell the Prince" was the constant cry. And he never turned a deaf ear, never refused his sympathy, advice, and help. And strange to say, such recitals never bored him. He was by nature inquisitive—wanted to know everything about everybody—and in this way his sympathy, pity, and help were brought into play. Of course, this universal benevolence led very often to interesting situations, and I know of more than one occasion when a wife had consulted him one day and the husband another, the Prince giving his warmest sympathy and sound advice to both. And this great willingness, nay, desire on the part of the Prince to help, was by no means limited merely to benefiting personal friends, or indeed people of any social importance. He told me one day in Paris that Théo, "La Jolie Parfumeuse," had been asking his advice about how to deal with a young American whose infatuation for her was not only boring her but giving great pain to the lad's family: and once when Saffery, the great bookmaker, could not see his way out of a very delicate dilemma connected with the Omnium (the

French St. Leger) I asked the Prince if he could see him and advise him, assuring him (but he knew it without my telling him) that he could absolutely rely on the man's discretion and silence, and he consented at once, solved the problem, and put everything all right. "What a brick he is!" said Saffery when he told me about it. But these, taken quite haphazard, are only two out of a hundred similar incidents I could chronicle—sympathy and kind and delicate help for all and for every class, and I often think that there have been few men in whom the old Latin writer's "Homo sum: humani nihil a me alienum puto" was more truly exemplified than in the Prince. And with this, what a rare and precious gift of forgiveness! Not only did he never harbour the least feeling of revenge (which, as Napoleon III wittily and truly said, is a dish to be eaten cold), but he forgave truly and sincerely, and from his very heart. And all in his intimacy knew how much he had to forgive—how much more than most men—treachery, malignant falsehood, incredible ingratitude, even gross fraud, not to speak of the minor offences springing from vulgar insolence. And not only did he forgive, but his many bitter experiences of the utter baseness of some of his fellow beings never made him a cynic. I never heard him sneer at anything or anybody, and I cannot imagine him doing such a thing. When the first shock of the wound was over, and the astonishment slightly tinged with disgust had faded from his eyes to give place

to a very comic look of resignation, which he liked to assume, and which all his friends will remember, after a short pause, and a sigh, he would smile again and say "Enfin!" There was only one instance when he found it hard to forgive; and, so delicate is the subject, that I may only refer to it as the occasion when, at Marlborough House, he said to a man he was very fond of and had trusted: "I don't believe it. I can't believe it, and I shan't even ask you to soil your lips by denying it. Just take my hand; that will be enough." To which the other, a *gentilhomme quand même,* whatever his faults might be, replied almost with tears as he turned away from the hand so kindly extended to him, "I can't take it, Sir."

The one thing the Prince openly and avowedly abhorred was hypocrisy, and in this Pecksniffian land of ours there was often not a little of this carrion to offend his nostrils. His remark to me when I told him what a retired Messalina then gracing our Peerage had said in condemnation of Sir Charles Dilke, at the time of the famous scandal, was positively massive in the disgust it contained; but directly after he had made it he burst out laughing, partly at his own vehemence, and partly at the "horror" of the mature Marchioness for whom no nook or cranny in the whole Temple of the Paphian Goddess held a secret she had not penetrated and enjoyed. Affectation was another thing the Prince greatly disliked, and as he was an admirable mimic he often, in the most good-natured way and never when it was a lady,

and of course in the absence of the offender, would imitate very amusingly some of the airs and graces which had been the least to his liking. I never knew a man more fully inspired with the *joie de vivre,* or one who enjoyed life more thoroughly: and what wonder for, apart from his position, he had brains, good health, a kind heart, and good looks. And there was something of the poet in him too, for he had an eager sympathy with much that poets sing of, and at times a quick appreciation of the passing away of all things human. I remember one special instance of this. I had been telling him how young Loulou Schwartzenberg had been recalled to Vienna and put *unter Kuratel* for his extravagant and generous recognition of sweet smiles and kisses; and quoted the well-known lines:

> "Come, fill the Cup, and in the fire of Spring
> Your Winter-garment of Repentance fling:
> The Bird of Time has but a little way
> To flutter—and the Bird is on the wing."

"Say that again," said the Prince; and, when I obeyed him, he repeated the words—"but a little way to flutter, and the Bird is on the wing," adding: "That's true: that's very good." Then he said: "Write that down for me, like a good chap!" which of course I did. I think we might on that occasion very possibly have drifted into an interesting and sentimental talk (for we were quite alone) but for the sudden arrival of the Marquis Dupont—that gifted

sculptor and most charming *homme du monde* who was a great favourite both with the Prince and Princess, and who always ran round to the Bristol from his apartment in the Rue St. Florentin whenever he heard his Royal friend had arrived in Paris.

I have said that the Prince was inquisitive. He certainly was, but I need hardly say I do not mean in the sense of seeking to pry into private secrets. Being in such warm and sympathetic touch with humanity, as he was, he very naturally liked to know what human beings were about; and, being aware of this, I made it a point to get to know all sorts and conditions of people in Paris so that I might have some amusing and funny things to tell him the next time he came to his little entresol in the Place Vendôme. I say "funny" because the Prince was no exception to the general rule that the kindest-hearted men have almost invariably the keenest sense of humour. I don't particularly refer to prominent philanthropists; for as a matter of fact the giving away of large sums of money to found and support charities does not always indicate kindness of heart. I mean men full of good feeling and sympathy and spontaneous affection for their fellow-beings. Someone truly said, "A sense of the ludicrous is one of the surest passports to Heaven," or words to that effect, and such a celestial passport the Prince possessed. He was very fond of American yarns and of the kind of humour generally associated with the land of Stars and Stripes, which, *en parenthèse,* is one of the reasons why he liked that

very charming raconteur, Chauncey M. Depew, whose cablegram, "Only Heaven is left," which he sent to Lord Rosebery when Ladas won the Derby amused the Prince immensely. But he was not hard to please and even condescended to be amused sometimes at some of my own silly sallies.

By the way, Lord Lyons was not much of a raconteur, but I heard him make the Prince laugh once by telling him how, when a German asked another the name of an English friend, the reply was, "His name is Lord Smith, but it is spelt Johnson."

I have spoken of the forgiving spirit and kind sympathy of the Prince with all in trouble. These Christian gifts had a very serious disadvantage. The man in the street (and by that I only mean the people who did not know the Prince personally) often mistook for approval what was really only kindness and pity. Nothing, of course, could be more ridiculous. To a man in a less exalted position such a grotesque misunderstanding (in many cases wilful and malicious misunderstanding) would simply have been annoying, but to the Heir Apparent it was sometimes absolutely harmful. In sticking up for Valentine Baker as he did, he was, of course, absolutely right (with what heat he spoke about this matter in Paris!), for the gallant Colonel had done nothing unworthy of an officer and a gentleman, and it was purely and simply wicked private influence loaded with lies that excited the Queen against poor Valentine who, although perhaps not a saint, was most as-

suredly guiltless of the base conduct attributed to him, namely, insulting a modest and defenceless girl in a railway carriage. But the ignorant and "unco guid" held up their hands in horror and whispered: "Oh, how awful! How can the Prince defend such a man?" Of course, this sympathy with, or perhaps I ought rather to say pity for, the under dog unfitted the Prince to an extent to be the supreme arbiter in certain matters of honour in Society, just as there are from time to time judges (Sir Anthony Cleasby, I think, was one of them) who are so tender-hearted that they cannot be trusted to try a man for murder; and so Mr. George Payne was by universal acclamation appointed the High Priest in all such matters, a delicate and difficult office which he filled with the greatest success during the last thirty odd years of his life. The Prince sometimes found him too hard (as in the case of a man well known in society who was caught cheating at cards at Nice and who rushed back to London to send in his papers, but was forestalled by a wire from Mr. Payne to the Duke of Cambridge, and arrived in London to find himself cashiered—"George need not have sent that wire, I think," said the Prince to me), but as a matter of fact Mr. Payne was not only just but also very lenient, for the two offences he very properly deemed absolutely unpardonable were dishonesty, and cruelty of any kind to a woman.

In the late King there were two very distinct personalities. There was the official man, the Heir

Apparent, not un-German, somewhat stiff and even starchy, and very likely all the more starched and stiff because he felt how hard it was to keep the real personality, the jolly English gentleman, from piercing through the official Teutonic covering, and chuckling at you and with you. So it is that no life of Edward VII based on written documents—except indeed letters of a most private character—can ever give any true idea of the real man.

In this connection I must refer to the recent biography of his Majesty written by Sir Sidney Lee from data furnished by newspapers and public documents and from private papers lent by our present Gracious Sovereign. Naturally not much can be expected from a work written by one who had only a slight, personal acquaintance with his subject; but, even bearing this in mind, as in all fairness one is bound to do, an irresistible feeling of sadness comes to one in turning over the pages of this lifeless record of the career of a man who was so essentially full of life. Disraeli says somewhere, speaking of a man no longer young, that he involuntarily reminded you of Youth, as a vacant orchestra does of music. So with Sir Sidney's biography: facts and dates are here, but the real man connected with them is not to be found anywhere within its pages, and such remarks concerning the dead King as the compiling coroner thinks fit to make have as little value as lack of intimate knowledge and sympathy can make them. When someone asked old, witty, sleepy Tom Apple-

ton if a certain man, who had recently been elected Senator, had a great reputation in his native State, the Sidney Smith of America replied, "Oh, no, his reputation is purely national!" So with this bulky volume; it is purely national; it is a bundle of more or less correct cuttings loosely tied together with thin strings of comment—weak knots in which condemnation and censure curl curiously in and out and round and about carelessly-twined threads of commonplace. Purely national indeed: not in the subtle and cynical sense of Tom Appleton's definition, but in the way that, for example, the Crimean Memorial in Waterloo Place, with its attendant horrors of Sidney Herbert and Florence Nightingale, is national. Of course, in the circumstances, nothing better could be expected; the actual facts are for the most part accurately stated, and the book is admirably written, as is to be expected from a distinguished man-of-letters of obvious refinement; but it is a pity that the biographer should have thought it his duty to hang from time to time upon his national monument some rather withered wreaths of comment. There is in Sir Sidney Lee's biography some direct criticism of Queen Victoria; and, although the subject is distasteful in this respect, one can hardly help referring to it. In late years it has been the pose of some writers, whose knowledge of contemporary history seems to be derived solely from books and newspapers, to decry this illustrious lady, and such comment from such pens is not, of course, worth any kind of serious

notice. But it is, I own, rather surprising to find a very strong taint of this attitude towards Queen Victoria in a book written by a gentleman about a gentleman who simply idolised his mother.

I do not pretend, from personal experience, to know more about her Majesty than any other man of my age; and although I have had friends among members of the Royal Family, I never learnt much from them about the Queen. The Prince of Wales rarely spoke of her—at least to me—and the Duke of Edinburgh never, that I can remember. But I have known many people who were in constant touch with her Majesty—notably Jane Lady Ely (whom I saw a great deal of, and who was never tired of talking about her Royal Mistress and dear friend) and Lord Cross, who advised the Queen in business matters. To reproach Queen Victoria with being German—a sneer levelled at her to-day by the sons of unimportant people of her time, and one, alas! echoed in Sir Sidney Lee's book, is not only puerile but shows an utter ignorance of the state of affairs in those days. The various Principalities and Grand Duchies of Germany furnished consorts of both sexes, and rulers if and when required, to every civilised country in Europe. Every reigning house was Germanised, except, of course, that of Turkey. One family indeed, the Saxe-Coburgs, made it a specialty to provide on request a Prince or Princess to any country in need of such commodity. Princes and Princesses of Saxe-Coburg were brought up, some as

Protestants, some as Roman Catholics, so that every taste or fancy could be suited. For example, Belgium wanted a Roman Catholic ruler: so Leopold, guaranteed sound in dogma, was sent. England wanted for our girl Queen a husband who must be young, healthy, respectable, handsome if possible, and unfeignedly Protestant. The stock in hand was carefully examined, and Prince Albert was packed and despatched to Windsor. His income was not large, but he was the consort required. And so on all over Europe. Asia and Africa indeed escaped; but no doubt if China or Turkey had applied, the Saxe-Coburgs would have had the very thing ready—either sex, any religion—if given sufficient time to clap on a fez or pigtail and cram up the Koran or Confucius. In the circumstances, therefore, to reproach Queen Victoria with being German is both unjust and absurd; all her family were German: how then could she be anything else? It is like the old American maiden lady who prudishly pouted to the Siamese Twins, "I wonder you're not ashamed of yourselves! I can't imagine how you two can live in such disgusting intimacy: no privacy whatever!" Besides there was nothing new in the fact of England being governed by Germans—governed in fact by foreigners. The Welsh Tudors had given place to the Scottish Stuarts; then came Dutch William; and after that the German Georges. Why then throw stones at Queen Victoria (who was, as a matter of fact, more English in her character, nature, and sym-

pathies than any one of our Sovereigns since Elizabeth) because she, a girl of twenty, surrendered her heart to a noble-minded man whom she adored, who was in every way worthy of her love, and to whom she clung for safety and wisdom in counsel, amid the not very respectable jumble of people left in Society and in power after the deaths of George IV and William IV? I say "for safety," and I use the words advisedly; for, as the most casual student of history knows, the Georges and Williams had succeeded in so exasperating their long-suffering country that the Monarchy was in grave danger. With this fact well before him, Prince Albert saw the necessity of bringing up his children with very special care, preferring to err, if compelled to err at all, on the side of discipline—but discipline always tempered with the most tender affection—rather than on that of laxity. And as his eldest son emerged from childhood, and his temperament gradually developed and revealed itself, the Prince Consort realised more and more acutely to what special temptations this handsome amiable boy, full of kind sympathy for others, would be most likely to be exposed and give way to; and so he redoubled his vigilance and discipline in the direction of combating these temptations. But Prince Albert was only very young himself and therefore inexperienced. So he ignored the well-known fact that Youth will assert itself in spite of all moral discipline, and that you cannot put hot blood into a bottle carefully corked with precept and labelled

"Self-control," and not expect it to ferment and burst out of its prison all the more riotous and vehement in the enjoyment of its new freedom. It was, of course, a mistake, but a very natural and certainly a very pardonable one—a mistake millions of parents are making daily and will continue to make until there are no more sons to train in the way they should go.

There is in Sir Sidney Lee's book a suggestion (when dealing with the boyhood and early youth of King Edward) that the young Prince's affection for his father was tempered by awe and fear. If Christopher Teesdale, who was the constant companion of the Prince in those days, is to be believed, this was not the case. His exact words when speaking to my mother of the Prince's affectionate disposition were, "He simply adored his father and idolises his mother." His love for his brothers and sisters is well known. He stood by the Duke of Edinburgh in a very unpleasant and even perilous scandal in which an actor, among others, was involved, and his love for his youngest brother Leopold was almost that of a mother for her child. The late Duke of Albany died in Augustus Lumley's villa at Cannes, having danced himself to death at a party at the Villa de la Bocca. The Prince of Wales heard the news on the Aintree Racecourse, and took a special train at once to the south of France. Lord Dupplin and I went to meet him at the Chemin de Fer de Ceinture which encircles Paris, for the Prince did not want to stay a mo-

ment in the French capital nor wish anyone to know of his presence there; and he was crying like a child when we joined him. By the way, he told me many months afterwards that his young brother had often been warned not to dance, and had met with a serious accident at the Roxburghes at Floors Castle as the result of too much dancing, not very long before that last dance of all at Cannes.

General Bruce, the Governor and mentor of the young Prince, was a very unpleasing and "unco dour" martinet (I remember him well as a child and hated him, for he was always frowning and clearing his throat), but for Sir Sidney to picture the young Prince as being afraid of Bruce is not in accordance with fact. He judged him to be the old fool and bully that he was; and although quite willing to obey him in matters which did not interest him in the least—questions of mere formality—always succeeded in having his own way in things he had at heart.

I never heard the Prince allude to Bruce but once, and that was many years after the death of his old Governor, and in Paris, to Laurence Oliphant at the Hotel Bristol one morning. Vansittart (the genial "Van," whose daughter is now the wife of a member of one of our leading banking families), Marcus Beresford, and I were the only other persons present. Oliphant, describing some *savant* he had met in Germany, said of him that he was a cross-grained old bully whom nothing could please, which was an unusually harsh remark in the mouth of Oliphant, who

was kindness itself. The Prince smiled, looked over at me, and said with his funny chuckle, "Oh, I know the sort. I had a chap like that as Governor when I was a boy."

There is a story told—whether true or not I don't know—of King Edward saying to his grandson, the present Prince of Wales, when he was a little child: "You must be a good boy, David, for if you're not, when you become King they'll cut off your head as they did to King Charles." To which the child replied: "Oh, I don't care. I shall never be King." So in the early youth of King Edward, the examples of profligacy furnished by Charles II, the Regent, and others, were always being held up as warnings which, if disregarded, might lead to the downfall of the Monarchy. But alas! one very sad and notable result (though a very indirect result, of course) of the disregard of some of Bruce's admonitions by the young Prince was the death of the Prince Consort. This fact is not mentioned in Sir Sidney's biography, but I believe it is true. In those palæolithic days, it was not considered at all proper for very young men to smoke in public; and in Bruce's cold, condemnatory catalogue of the crimson crimes, which no self-respecting lad could possibly be guilty of, smoking in public no doubt ranked somewhere between adultery and drunkenness. Be this as it may, smoking (at least in public) was prohibited by the authorities at Cambridge. The young Prince transgressed; there was trouble; a mild tempest seemed brewing in the

University teapot; the Prince Consort rushed down to the banks of the Cam to calm the troubled waters; and on his return journey caught the chill which not long after developed into the fatal fever which made his loving and devoted wife a widow. In the agony of her grief the Queen bitterly reproached the Prince for being in one way the cause of his father's death; and, as a matter of fact, the Prince by no means held himself to be wholly blameless in the matter.

But to leave the tragic for less serious matters; the reproaches levelled at Queen Victoria for not at this time (or indeed until many years later, and even then only very reluctantly) allowing her eldest son to have any say at all in matters political provide amusing reading for those who knew the late King well. The most lovable of men, and certainly very clever, he was beyond all possible doubt, in his younger days, one of the most indiscreet gossipers in the Empire. This special weakness of his was notorious; and, taken in conjunction with his never dormant spirit of inquisitiveness ("Who is that? Where have I seen him before?" were never long absent from his lips), led to the conviction among his friends that by far the best way to have a secret published to the world was to "tell it to the Prince." There is, of course, nothing indelicate or unkind meant in noting this weakness of the late King; it is, to all who knew him, as undeniable a fact as that he wore a beard. Therefore, to have allowed the Heir Apparent to have any special and intimate knowledge of any matter of

State or political question of the least importance or delicacy would have been an act of sheer folly. That is the plain, blunt fact. The Queen knew this, and so very naturally and very wisely declined the Prince's eager offers to help her with his advice. As a matter of fact, later on, and when he had gained experience of life, no man could and did give sounder advice; but it was chiefly in social matters. Inquisitiveness, coupled with lack of discretion, loquacity, and gossip, which was a most prominent characteristic of the late King when he was Prince of Wales, made him an undesirable guide in the perilous path of politics. A very striking and (in diplomatic circles) well-known example of this was the absurdity—there is no other word to be used—connected with his visit to the Russian capital after the murder of Alexander II. His questions, and his uninvited but earnestly given advice about reforms in that distracted country, were absolutely comic; and Lord Dufferin's description of the whole thing which I heard him give many years later to a cousin of mine was very funny. By the way, while I think of it, the account given by Sir Sidney Lee of the episode of General de Gallifet, when a prisoner during the Franco-Prussian War, writing to ask the Prince of Wales to use his influence with his brother-in-law the Crown Prince of Prussia to obtain his release by an exchange of prisoners is quite wrong. I heard the real facts from the Marquis himself, and also from Louise Duchess of Manchester. It is true that the General wrote and asked

the Prince, but what really took place was this. The Prince, purely out of affection, and well knowing the hot water he would get into for doing so, consented to arrange the desired exchange of prisoners, but very naturally made it a condition that Gallifet should promise on his release not to take up arms again for his country during the remainder of the war. This Gallifet refused to do in language that would have delighted Cambronne, and that was why, and the sole and only reason why, the negotiations fell through. (There are some people still alive who can confirm what I say.) But when Sir Sidney Lee throws away the crutches of dates, and facts registered in newspapers and official documents, and ventures on appreciations of his own, he often stumbles and falls as, for example, when he gravely suggests that the Prince ever took Lord Charles Beresford seriously, and asserts that "the Prince was responsible for Lord Charles's admission to political office." Angels and ministers of grace, defend us! It would be no more absurd to say that the Prince recommended Dan Leno for the Archbishopric of Canterbury. When Sir Sidney states that "Lord Randolph Churchill exerted on the Prince a personal fascination," those among us who read that sort of thing and remember the real facts can only feel that the pen that put such paragraphs on paper must have been of the kind known as a "Pickwick."

But it would fill many pages to deal with the comments of this class with which the author has filled

the pages of his book; so I shall leave the subject for the time being and only make a few remarks concerning two of the scandals with which the Prince's name was connected, and which I think it might have been wiser for Sir Sidney to have passed over in silence, but which as he has made mention of them I shall allude to as briefly as possible. Personally I never heard the Prince say a word about the Mordaunt case, but all his most intimate friends of his own age knew the facts of the matter. He consulted Mr. George Payne about it, and he also consulted Mme. de Sagan, who told him he had acted most unwisely in going into the witness-box, and that he should have left England on some pretext or other before the trial. Mme. de Sagan told me this herself at the time on the racecourse at Longchamps, just after the very disagreeable episode of the Prince having been hissed and hooted at Epsom.

Princesse de Sagan informed me that the Prince had said to her he was forced to stay and face it out and even go into the witness-box; but, when I mentioned this to Mr. Payne, he said Mme. de Sagan must have made a mistake: the Prince could not have told her that, for it was untrue. No pressure whatever was brought to bear on the Prince in the matter. He himself (in one of those moments of impulsiveness which sometimes got him into embarrassment, as in his writing that unfortunate letter to Dr. Benson about gambling) *offered* to give evidence, not thinking for a moment that his old friend Serjeant Ballan-

tine would accept the offer; and, when the subpœna came, no one was more astonished and distressed than the Prince himself. But, in the circumstances, it was impossible for him to plead privilege (as Argaïz did in the Wentworth case) and especially as Ballantine was telling the story of the offer all over London.

The other scandal which I think it was unnecessary to chronicle, as the Prince was but indirectly mixed up in it, is the Tranby Croft affair, in which Sir William Gordon Cumming was accused of cheating at cards. The whole case from beginning to end was the most lamentable mistake, and accusations were made right and left without the least truth or reason. (Sir William, I am certain, was innocent.) For example, to cite one among very many, Lady Warwick, at that time Lady Brooke, was supposed to have "given the show away"; but that lady had nothing whatever to do with the matter, and in fact I think I am right in stating she had never been to Tranby Croft. But deplorable as the whole scandal was (and wholly unnecessary) the most unfortunate part of it was the letter which the Prince in a moment of impulsiveness sent to Dr. Benson, the Archbishop of Canterbury, in which he wrote: *"I have a horror of gambling!"* The letter, I venture to think, was a regrettable mistake; for there can be no question that the Prince was at one time extraordinarily fond of playing roulette, and that the evidence disclosed he had played baccarat for high stakes at Tranby Croft.

CHAPTER II

IN *Things I Shouldn't Tell* I selected Herbert Bismarck as being the biggest all-round cad I have ever met; so now I have no hesitation in naming the late Duc d'Aumale as being beyond all question the finest type of the Grand Seigneur, using this expression in its highest sense, it has ever been my privilege and delight to know.

Not being a Frenchman, I had, of course, no political bias or opinion; but my father's intimacy with Prince Louis Napoleon in London, his friendship with Morny and his father the Comte de Flahaut (a friendship begun at Lord Lansdowne's at Bowood), his intimacy with Plon Plon and with old Joachim Murat, our relationship to the Neys, and the ever affectionate kindness of the Empress to my mother and myself naturally made me attached to the Bonapartist party and see more of that set than of others.

But in the Legitimist camp we had many dear and intimate friends as well—notably General de Charette and members of all the different branches of the family of La Rochefoucauld—especially the very magnificent "Bisaccia" and his most charming wife —and of the Mortemart family, which owes its fortune to the famous Mme. de Montespan.

Of the Republican party we knew but few, and

still less of the Orleanist, until, at the death of the Comte de Chambord, it was somewhat coldly recognised by the Faubourg St. Germain as at length representing the Maison de France.

The Orleanist party (of course I speak from a purely social point of view) was never popular owing not only to the vulgar perfidy of Louis Philippe, but to the unpleasing personality of its most prominent members.

The Prince de Joinville was intensely *bourgeois,* and he was so deaf that it was torture to talk with him (I can see my mother now screaming into his ear-trumpet). His long-legged, gawky son, the Duc de Penthièvre (at one time a naval cadet at the American Naval Academy at Newport, and then at Annapolis, which made his English very American), seemed to me always more like a Jocrisse in a Palais Royal farce than a Prince of Blood Royal—something like a young Hyacinthe, that huge-nosed celebrity of the Palais Royal Theatre. The Comte de Paris was so astonishingly German in general bearing that, as he knew himself, for a long time after the War of 1870 many even of his own party rather shrank from him. His eldest son, whom I knew when he was a fat, pasty-faced clumsy *potache,* who looked always as if he were going to burst out of his Lycée uniform, was never liked even by the boys of his age. The Duc de Nemours, who looked like Henri Quatre, was very popular, but I only knew him by sight.

The only two Orleans princes I ever knew, and who were universally liked, were the Duc d'Aumale and the Duc de Chartres. Oddly enough, the first and the last time I ever spoke to the Duc d'Aumale was in London. During the Second Empire he was an exile from France; but once, when I was over here with my parents for a fortnight, the young Prince came up from Orleans House to see my father and mother. They happened to be away on a visit, and to receive him there was only the baby (myself) and the two nurses—one French and one English, the latter recommended by Thackeray, who always used to stop us when I was with her in the street and take me from her arms and toss me up in the air, greatly to my delight.

When I came, for sporting purposes, to be the Duc d'Aumale's neighbour at Chantilly I saw a great deal of him both at his splendid palace there, at Mme. de Saint-Didier's, at Mme. de Vatry's, and at my own little place near Viarmes. I reminded him once of his being received on one occasion in London by a baby and two nurses, and he recollected it perfectly. Thackeray told my father laughingly that he would put the incident of a baby receiving a Royal Prince in a book; and, if he had, I am sure he would have made it very amusing. The last time that I saw the genial Prince, whom the members of our Royal Family always called "Cousin Aumale," was, as I have stated, also in London. I had come over from Chantilly on a matter not unconnected with race-

horses, but had not attended to my business, having spent my time staying with friends in the country. In consequence, I was very angry with myself—not even comforted by the aphorism, which Lawley told me President Garfield had told him he heard Emerson once let fall, "Mankind is as lazy as it dares to be" —and was, *more Britannico,* venting my bad temper in cursing the weather, and remembering with savage satisfaction what Rustem Pasha, then Ottoman Ambassador here, a Roman Catholic, and the highest type of that very delightful individual, a Turkish gentleman, had said to me at Brighton:

"Have you a summer in England? Because I've been here five years, and there's not been one really hot day."

I was, as I say, in that uncomfortable frame of mind, shrouded in self-reproach, when in Piccadilly, just coming out of Hatchards' bookshop, I saw my Royal neighbour in France. The mere sight of his kind, sad, handsome face put to flight at once all the croaking imps of discontent, and we joined hands. Like myself, his Royal Highness was only over here for a few days. I think it was on private business and that it was his last visit to England. It was certainly the last time I ever saw him, for on my return to France in a day or two, I did not go down to Chantilly for many months, and when I did, he was away in Sicily, where he died. The Piccadilly parley was but short; he asked about my mother, and I asked him about Mme. de Clinchamp. We spoke of a com-

mon friend—a lady who shall be nameless—who was writing silly books, which were very popular; and, knowing the Prince knew English literature *à fond,* I remarked that they made me think of what Lockhart said of some contributions to the *Quarterly Review:*

"They teach nothing; they mean nothing; they are nothing; but they go down like bottled velvet."

This amused him; and then we parted.

"À bientôt, Monseigneur!" But alas! *Dis aliter visum.* It was, of course, owing to the accident of his being my very near neighbour in the country that I was privileged to enjoy so many long talks, pleasant walks—in fact, I might almost venture to say comparative intimacy—with that great gentleman, Henri d'Orléans. But another link between us was Mme. de Saint-Didier (English by birth), who was a great friend of my mother, and at whose house in Paris—Rue de la Ville L'Évêque, near the *hôtel* of the Kersaints, and near the apartment of my friend, the Abbé Hurel—I often met his Royal Highness before I went to live at Chantilly, to be near my horses and trainer and many people I knew—the Coneglianos, Mme. de Sancy de Parabère, Countess Paul Berthier, the Duc de Massa (Franconville, where the private theatricals were always amusing, was not far away), and very many others. I had heard from Mme. de Saint-Didier many interesting and but little known particulars concerning the Duc d'Aumale before I became his neighbour in the country, and these increased my desire to become better acquainted with

the Prince, whom Mme. la Baronne always spoke of most enthusiastically as being a noble type of man. He had, she told me (and of course quite truly), been very badly treated. It was perhaps but natural that he should have been exiled with the other members of his family during the Second Empire; but when the Empire fell, and Thiers, his father's former minister, became President, everyone naturally expected the Orleans Princes would at once be permitted to return to France. But at first Thiers refused to sanction this; and it was only when the Duc d'Aumale was elected a legislator that the tricky and treacherous little Adolphe gave way. But he began at once to lay traps to undermine and destroy that popularity which the Prince always enjoyed, not only in Society, but among the working classes. It was pointed out to him that, as a soldier, it behoved him to draw his sword against all tainted with Communism; the invitation to preside over the court-martial to try Bazaine was, as everyone knew, including the Prince himself, really prompted by a hope that by so presiding he would be looked upon by the man in the street as typifying tyranny. Poor little, vile, gifted Thiers did not know his man: the power of true nobility of character was quite beyond his appreciation. The Duc d'Aumale, as we know, consented to preside over the court-martial, but did it with such exquisite dignity, delicacy, and fairness that he not only lost none of his popularity, but greatly increased it by so doing. When the fat villain on trial for his life sought to

justify his treacherous surrender of Metz, by saying, "Il n'y avait plus rien!" the Duke's famous and splendid remark, "Il y avait la France, Monsieur!" found an enthusiastic echo in every Frenchman's heart.

Mme. de Saint-Didier was always insistent on the great jealousy of Thiers, and of his fear of the popularity of Henri d'Orléans, and this became so dangerous that the members of the Orleans family left the palatial Randan, near Vichy, and took refuge at Sarry with the Duc d'Audiffret-Pasquier, who immediately went to Versailles himself, and simply and sternly said to the sinister little old man, "The Princes are with me, and they shall stay there." (Les Princes sont chez moi, et ils y resteront.)

So Adolphe had for the time being to lie dormant, though it was not until the election of the Duc d'Aumale and the Prince de Joinville to the Chamber of Deputies (the legality of which was at first disputed) had been made valid that the members of the Orleans family were really free and in safety. Mme. de Saint-Didier, who was behind the scenes all the time, told me that the duel in those early days of the Republic between the Princes and the ex-servant of their father was very amusing, and like a comedy by Scribe. She said that little Adolphe's refusal at first to admit the Prince to France was all the more grotesque owing to the fact of his having, in his famous quest for money, applied to the Duc d'Aumale at Wood Norton, and received most generous

help. By the way, I have often spoken to Thiers, and on one occasion at Trouville had a long talk with him about English Public Schools (about which he was absolutely ignorant), but I have nothing to chronicle of him except that he always took off his hat like a monkey—taking it by the back and tilting it over in front—a thing I have never seen any other man do except in jest. His enemies always said that he had married his own daughter, and it is certain that the baby whom he afterwards married was born while he was the acknowledged *cher ami* of the mother, to whom the young and penniless adventurer owed everything. His pilgrimage to the different Courts after the Déchéance was a farce (Alexander II, the handsome, genial giant then ruling Russia, refused to see him: and when the little man expostulated, the Czar wittily explained: "It is not M. Thiers whom I should be receiving but la France en Thiers [*entière*]."")

As for the loan to pay the indemnity, that was, of course, a purely business matter, and the personality of Thiers had no more to do with finding the money than the fact of Swinburne's having red hair had to do with his writing *Atalanta in Calydon*. The little man himself made a very handsome sum out of the deal, and then had the amusing audacity to allow himself to be called the Liberator of the invaded country! Handsome and charming Junius Morgan (the late Pierpont Morgan's father), who really engineered the whole thing, used to roll out with great

glee, and his eyes full of laughter, Thiers' title of "Libérateur!—Li-bé-ra-teur!"

As I have already said, it was owing to the happy accident of my being his neighbour in the country, coupled with the fact that he had known me and mine for very many years, that I was so often honoured with long walks and intimate chats with the Duc d'Aumale. He was by nature very frank and simple, and as I was a foreigner and "très sympathique" to him (as he told my mother) he spoke with the greatest freedom and frankness to me on all kinds of subjects, not only in a gossipy way, but often with great brilliancy.

For example, I shall never forget his comparison between Thiers and Guizot. Of the former he said, "You have a word in English that describes him admirably—as short and hard as the man himself—cad." Guizot he always spoke of very kindly, and on more than one occasion quoted some very touching and beautiful words of Guizot about sympathy—words which I afterwards looked up and copied and stowed away in a note-book. The words are so profoundly true and original and expressed with such exquisite delicacy that I give them here:

"Je puis me passer de sympathie comme on peut se passer de tout, mais quand j'en retrouve un peu, je ne comprends plus comment on s'en passe—c'est un plaisir si immense! C'est tout autre chose qu'un plaisir. C'est tout autre chose que ce qu'on appelle le bonheur. C'est le sentiment de la vie même. A

lui tout seul l'homme ne se sent pas vivre. Il a besoin d'une âme au dehors pour sentir son âme, comme d'un miroir pour voir son image. C'est là le pouvoir de la sympathie. Elle met l'homme en présence et en possession de la vie intérieure; elle le fait jouir de tout ce qui se passe en lui—de ce qu'il sent, de ce qu'il pense, de ce qu'il dit, des impressions les plus fugitives comme les plus profondes de tout son être qui, sans ce reflet—et s'il ne se contemple et se complète dans un autre—se demeure presqu'inconnu, étranger à lui-même, et ne s'aperçoit souvent que comme un fardeau."

Sympathy was indeed what the Prince always yearned for, and he certainly found it in the members of his family, all of whom loved him tenderly. In Mme. de Clinchamp, the devoted companion of his latter years, and in the faithful Marquis de Beauvoir he also found complete sympathy. He was a great sentimentalist, and it was indeed owing to this that I was enabled to bring one of my dearest friends, Edouard Pailleron, in touch with his Royal Highness.

The prince one day had been referring to the vile treachery of Trochu, who owed everything to the Empress and who said to her Majesty, when the news of Sedan and of the Emperor's abdication came to Paris, "Madame, I am a Breton and a Catholic, and I am therefore doubly bound to keep my word of honour; I pledge my word that to reach your Majesty the mob will have to step over my dead body." On the following morn he was the first to lead the

mob against the defenceless lady, and on the Duke referring to this one day, I quoted:

"Une bonne action demande une âme forte:
Aussi bien amitié, reconnaissance, amour,
Ce sont des fleurs du bien qui ne durent qu'un jour,
Et de trop lourds fardeaux pour cette race humaine
Que l'égoïsme essouffle et la vanité mène."

These lines delighted the Prince, who expressed a wish to know the author, and so I brought the very charming writer of "Les faux Ménages" and "Le Monde où l'on s'ennuie" and other masterpieces to Chantilly and introduced him to the Prince, who took him to his heart at once, as indeed nobody who knew him could fail to do.

The Duc d'Aumale had two things in common with the Prince of Wales (Edward the Seventh) for whom he entertained great affection—a dislike of being left alone, and a very peculiar little chuckle (friends of the late King will remember it well). I never knew any other Frenchman express amusement in this peculiar way; nor indeed so far as I can remember any Englishman except the Prince of Wales.

The Duc d'Aumale was very amusing and instructive about the latter-day holders of historical French titles who have no possible right to them, and would very frankly criticise them, whether they belonged or not to his party (as a matter of fact he had no party). He was very averse, however, from the silly, not to say snobbish, way in which some of the older members of the Faubourg St. Germain pretended to de-

spise titles conferred by the two Napoleons. "When the sovereign of a country bestows a title of nobility or confers a decoration, say, to-day, the recipient has as much right to be proud of it as if it had been granted to an ancestor by Henri IV or Louis XIV." Such were his words to me when we were discussing the matter of a recently created Grandee of Spain whose history, by the way, is so extraordinary that I shall narrate it here, leaving out the names in order to avoid giving annoyance to some living persons.

Some seventy odd years ago a hatter in Madrid committed forgery. Havana at that time was a penal settlement, and he was sent there, the Governor at that time being the well-known General Concha, later on created Marquis of Havana. How the convict hatter got to be on terms of intimate friendship with the Governor is somewhat of a mystery, but that he did so is beyond all doubt; the result being that, owing to dealings in tobacco, with the help of the General, the hatter became a millionaire; and when he returned to his native country he used his fortune with such effect in the service of the House of Bourbon that Queen Isabella made him a Marquis. Later on, when his liberal expenditure of money helped to bring about the Restoration, King Alfonso (the father of the present popular Sovereign) made him Duke and a Grandee of Spain. He was a good-looking, well-mannered man (I knew him later on in Paris) and made himself popular even in the most exclusive circles of Madrid; and there is a funny

story told of how, when someone bitterly complained that such a man should be made a Grandee, the very clever Duchess of Medina Celi said laughingly: "Well, I don't see why not. Poor old —— has put hats on so many other people's heads that I think it only right, in his old age, that he should be allowed to wear his own!!" The Duchess, of course, alluded to the privilege enjoyed by the Grandees of Spain of wearing their hats in the presence of their Sovereign.

But to return to the Duc d'Aumale. As everyone knows he was played battledore and shuttlecock with as an exile (expelled again in 1886 and allowed to return in 1889), and I shall never forget his account of the sadness of his return to the place of his former exile (Wood Norton), so full of tearful memories—his wife and his two boys dead. He told me he could not stand it, and used to come up incognito to London and roam for days about the town, quite alone. Anything was better than the ghost-haunted place in Worcestershire.

On the retirement of that ridiculous man President Jules Grévy (his wife had the appearance and manners of a cook and was wholly lacking in any knowledge of social matters, addressing, for example, that very splendid Neapolitan Prince and Spanish Duqueso—duke by marriage to a duchess—Fernan Nunez, as Duc Nunez!), Carnot got the Prince back to Chantilly, where he busied himself restoring the Château de Sylvie in the Forest—the retreat of the Maréchale Duchesse de Montmorency, whose hus-

band the Marshal was beheaded by order of Cardinal Richelieu. It was a pretty little place, and the Prince filled the house with works of art.

I never knew a more broad-minded man than the Duc d'Aumale. Not only did he very rarely speak ill of anyone, but he had a great admiration and liking for persons whom the man in the street would have counted his enemies. For example, he not only had the greatest esteem and respectful affection for the Empress, but he had a great liking for the Emperor. The kind-hearted, refined Prince recognised the same qualities in Napoleon the Third, and that was the bond of union.

Nothing indicative of the true nobility of character of the Emperor seemed to have escaped the Prince. I remember his praise of the exquisite delicacy and generosity (and this the Duc d'Aumale had from a most reliable authority) shown by Napoleon the Third in his personal interview with Franz Josef at Villa Franca in July after Solferino. "C'était parfait! C'était admirable!" exclaimed the Prince. This is but one instance out of many. He had a very great regard for Napoleon the Third as a man, and would never allow anyone to speak disparagingly of him in his presence.

What he thought of him as a Ruler of France is a different matter, and all I can say on that point is that the Prince in speaking of the Emperor often said: "Il était trop bon," which indeed was true. Louis Napoleon was too truly and sincerely a kind-hearted

gentleman and man of refinement to play successfully the *rôle* assigned to him by fate.

The Duc d'Aumale was, as I have stated, a very sincere friend of the Empress. They were in constant correspondence, and he never came to England without running down to Farnborough; and she stayed with him at his estate in Sicily, Zucco (which he bought and did not inherit as is generally supposed), where he made good wine; but it was a place, as he told her, that he did not care to inhabit.

It was at Zucco that the Empress Eugénie met the young Duke of Orleans, whom she did not like. As a matter of fact, neither did the Duc d'Aumale, and he showed his lack of affection by not going to the young Prince's wedding in Austria.

For Plon Plon he very naturally felt the most profound contempt. The Duc d'Aumale's famous and glorious "Lettre sur l'Histoire de France," written when that gifted cad and unprincipled and heartless *poseur* Prince Napoleon thought fit to insult in the Senate the House of Bourbon, and especially the Orleans branch, was a capsule of irony, wit, and contempt which Plon Plon found highly unpleasing to his palate. His Royal Highness sent me a copy of this pungent epistle very early one morning at Chantilly (I got it in bed about 7 o'clock) after I had been telling him the afternoon before how Baron Brunet had the previous week brought to my mother from Prince Napoleon, who was at that time at Prangins, a long and very charming letter referring

to old times. The Duke, I felt sure, sent me this copy of the famous letter as an artful hint not to be too ardently and blindly a Bonapartist.

By the way, when this letter was originally published, everyone told Plon Plon he was in honour bound to send a challenge to the writer. But Plon Plon, who was an arrant coward, turned a deaf ear to such counsel, and as Prince Murat had just then actually sent him a challenge, the handsome, gifted poltroon found things getting too hot and fled from France for the time being and hid himself abroad.

I never knew the Duc d'Aumale's eldest son, the Prince de Condé (whose death killed his mother), but by all accounts he was a most charming man who was universally beloved. He was offered the Crown of Greece (it was offered to everyone, I think, except perhaps to Mark Twain and Henry Irving), but refused, owing to the condition that the heir to the personage who accepted the crown should not only become Greek by nationality but by religion. Of course all that made no shadow of difference to young George of Denmark; he was desperately poor; the Powers, I believe, guaranteed him £25,000 a year if he should ever be dethroned, and so . . .

I don't think any man was ever more tenderly attached to his family than the Duc d'Aumale, and the untimely deaths of different members of it (that of the Duc de Guise, when only eighteen, of typhoid in Paris, and many others equally sad) were great blows to the Prince, who was as tender-hearted as a

woman. His kindness, one might almost call it tenderness, to Cuvillier Fleury was most touching. He had been the Prince's tutor and (like the Prince of Wales and old Brasseur) the Prince never forgot him.

By the way, it was old Cuvillier Fleury who received the Duc d'Aumale on the occasion of the latter's admission to the French Academy. He died during the second exile of the Prince, and, regarding this second expulsion from France, I cherish in my memory how pleased the Prince looked when, many years later in one of our many walks, I told him that old Schweinitz, the German Ambassador in Petersburg, had said to me that Bismarck had exclaimed when he heard of this act of tyranny and foolishness: "The French couldn't do anything more pleasing to me!" Princess Marguerite, the Duc de Chartres's second daughter, was walking with us that morning, and I can see now the sweet smile on her beautiful face as she looked at me in grateful recognition of the evident pleasure my careless little bit of gossip had caused.

The Prince was very ill for a few days in 1896; and the rather ponderous Curé of the Madeleine, Hertzog, came down. The Prince wanted our charming friend Hurel, but he was absent, and no one knew his address. As a matter of fact, he was a stone's throw from us at Franconville, the Duc de Massa's place, but we did not know it at the time. Then the Prince recovered and went with his intriguing sister, Prin-

cesse Clémentine (she looked like a very old parrot), to Sicily. He was happy there and wrote me two letters. He had the Duke and Duchess of Aosta with him, and also the Duc and Duchesse de Chartres, and everything seemed to be "quite all right," when suddenly, like a thunderbolt, came the awful news of the burning of the Charity Bazaar near the Duc de Chartres's stables in the Rue Jean Goujon, of the death of that saint the Duchesse d'Alençon, and of many others dear to him, including his great friend Mme. de Saint-Didier.

The Duchesse d'Alençon (by the way, the whole tragedy did not last more than a few minutes, as the draught feeding the flames was tremendous) simply knelt down and awaited her death, making no effort to escape. Three times poor Mme. de Saint-Didier was caught up by would-be rescuers, and three times they stumbled and fell with their burden; so she was left at last on the blazing floor.

This awful tragedy killed the Duc d'Aumale. He dearly loved the Duchesse d'Alençon and Mme. de Saint-Didier. He said to Mme. de Clinchamp: "I can't believe they have all been lost. Mme. de Saint-Didier may have been rescued. Do write and find out." She promised. He assured her when he said good-night that he felt perfectly well: but early the following morning she was called to his bedside; the Prince was dying; he never spoke; but his kind eyes recognised her, and he passed away with his hand on the shoulder of his devoted friend.

CHAPTER III

As I have already stated, my father was an intimate friend of Prince Louis Napoleon in London and retained this friendship when the Prince became Emperor. He was also the friend of Morny and of his father the Comte de Flahaut, and of Mocquard, Persigny, and Fleury. In fact, as all the *entourage* of Napoleon III were *habitués* of my mother's salon where (as we were foreigners) much was openly discussed that never reached the ears of the general public, not a few intimate details concerning the Emperor and those connected with him came to my knowledge from time to time. Many of the things told have faded from my memory; but I will just jot down a few that I remember, *currente calamo* quite haphazard, and with no regard to sequence; for, after all, the events connected with these crumbs of history are of such ancient date that the trivial particulars I have to chronicle can hardly aspire to rival in interest the exploits of Newcastle United or of Queen's Park Rangers, as broadcasted to the eager ears of Kilburn, Upper Tooting, and Ealing.

Old Lady Ailesbury told me once a rather curious fact about Napoleon III's stay in England before the *coup d'état*—a story which was repeated to me by

Bure, an illegitimate son of the Emperor, very many years later and which Bure assured me he knew to be true. It seems that the young Prince, while an exile in England, proposed to and was refused by a Miss Rowles, who, with her parents, lived in the very house, Camden Place, Chislehurst, where the rejected suitor in after years took refuge as Emperor of the French and died. The Empress always hated Camden Place. She did not like it from the very beginning, and as she was very superstitious, the Emperor had given orders that no one should let her know about the awful murder that had taken place in the house many years before—Mr. Bonar (partner of Mr. Angerstein) and his wife having been stabbed to death in their bedroom by a footman. The secret was kept for a time, but my friend Adalbert Duc de Montmorency, having heard of the crime and not knowing of the Emperor's wishes, unfortunately told her Majesty, who was so affected that she fainted. The very room in which the murder had been committed was her bedroom. After the Emperor's death, and as soon as she conveniently could do so, she left the place and went, as we know, to Farnborough. By the way, the silly report that the Emperor intended making an attempt to regain his throne by making a sudden and dramatic landing in France from Jimmy Ashbury's yacht is absolutely untrue, and this I had from Fleury, Mme. de Bassano, and others. In fact, it is grotesquely absurd on the very face of it (though credited by many, among

others by Disraeli), for even at Sedan he was so ill that it was, as Sir Henry Thompson said, a marvel how he could sit his horse, and his malady went on increasing in intensity until the accident in the operation performed on him by his friend the eminent specialist killed him. Another ridiculous yarn is that Morny on his deathbed said to him: "Beware of Prussia." That dramatic, but wholly unnecessary, warning must go to join Canrobert's "C'est magnifique mais ce n'est pas la guerre," William Pitt's "Alas! my poor country," and a thousand and one other fables. It is also untrue that Prince Louis Napoleon shot a man on the occasion of the Boulogne farce. This my father had from Thomas Slingsby Duncombe (Finsbury Tom, as he was called—a Radical *pour rire*), who, among other amusing tales, used to narrate how he was flogged at Eton many months after he had obtained his commission in the Guards! In connection with this wayward man (who was the most intimate English friend Louis Napoleon ever had and who, *inter alia,* used to narrate how the Prince once very seriously asked him if he thought the Jerseys would object if he offered himself to Lady Clementine—"Our Clem" —and how he told him that the masterful Lady Jersey would without any doubt have him kicked down stairs by a footman) I would note a now forgotten fact, namely, that he was the cause of the suicide of the father of a well-known solicitor recently practising in London, but not under his father's name. This

man kept in Cursitor Street one of the best known "sponging houses" of the day (for what a "sponging house" means I must refer the clean-shaven, permanently hair waved spectacled youth of the present day to *Vanity Fair*) and was making mints of money by so doing; for large sums were constantly being handled by the keeper of these temporary resting places for the well-to-do debtor and no account was ever asked for or forthcoming. Tom Duncombe was constantly being run in to the establishment of this (let us call him) Mr. Bigboy, and, of course, as constantly being released when the required money was paid; so Bigboy knew him well and profited by him not a little. Well, one day, this man met the member for Finsbury and told him he must arrest him once again. This time Tom objected. He had a *rendez-vous d'amour* to keep and didn't want to be bored by incarceration in Cursitor Street. "See here, Bigboy," he said. "You must pretend you can't find me for a couple of days. I don't want to be bothered going to your damned hole to-day. I shan't have a bob to spare till the day after to-morrow. And then I'll pay up on my word of honour. You know you can trust me. I've never failed you yet. So be off now and take me the day after to-morrow if you like." The rapacious fool shook his head. "No, sir," he said. "I'm sorry, but you must come now." Tom looked the blackguard straight in the face and then said: "Do you mean it, Bigboy?" "I do, sir, you must come with me now." "Very well," said

Duncombe, "as you like; but by God I'll make you regret this, you damned thief." So off he went, but when, as he said would be the case, two days later the money was paid and he was released, Tom jumped into his curricle, drove to the House of Commons, and later had a private Bill passed requiring keepers of sponging houses to furnish an account of all moneys that had passed into their hands.

Mr. Bigboy, foreseeing the inevitable picking of oakum, eventually cut his throat.

But all this has nothing to do with Napoleon III and his friends, except indeed that Tom Duncombe was one of the most intimate of them. Finsbury Tom said that Napoleon told him that Louis Philippe not only sanctioned his escape (after six years' captivity) from Ham, but, moreover, sent him money secretly to enable him to do so.

Duncombe always stoutly asserted (and with truth) that the Emperor was very unjustly condemned for confiscating the property of the Orleans family. Louis XVIII had confiscated that of the Bonapartes, and Louis Philippe had confiscated the property of the elder branch of his own family. The Orleans family was so rich—possessing over twelve million sterling—that by reason of this great wealth alone it was dangerous. The Emperor left them four millions and what he did confiscate he did not appropriate for himself or for the Bonaparte family—not a penny of it. He devoted it all to the creation of pensions for old soldiers (many of them who had

served in Louis Philippe's reign) and to the relief of the poor. I have said, on the authority of Tom Duncombe, that Louis Philippe sent Louis Napoleon money to help him to escape from Ham, but the wicked old Duke of Brunswick (he of the painted face, pink palace, spun glass wig and fifteen million francs' worth of jewels) did so also. This last, however, was only a loan, and Fleury told us the Duke was very careful always to see that the interest was paid punctually when due, and would complain bitterly, much to the amusement of the Emperor, who often kept him waiting on purpose, if there was the delay even of a week. This extraordinary old Royal thief (he had no more right to the regalia of the Duchy of Brunswick than the reader has to the Koh-i-noor) was not often invited to the Tuileries because the Empress hated him: and on one occasion he revenged himself, not without a little wit, for this coldness by replying to the late Lord Dudley when that most amiable of men asked him what he thought of the Palace: "Pas mal pour y passer la nuit!"

By the way, the Duke was robbed of some of his jewels once by an English valet, but he dared not prosecute because the man could have made unpleasant disclosures. The valet was, however, eventually caught and sent to jail through very stupidly offering some of the stolen jewels to the Duchess of Sutherland to submit to Queen Victoria. They were recognised at once and the man was arrested. But the wicked Duke could hardly hope to escape being

robbed, for in his pink house in the Avenue de Friedland he never received anybody but the most vile adventurers and their female belongings, very notable among them being the well-known Labruyère (Catherine Schumacher), a *demi-mondaine* who married the penniless Marquis d'Orvault when he was eighty-two. This old reprobate (Maubreuil was the family name) had originally been a Legitimist but 'verted. He was given the Legion of Honour by Napoleon I, but again 'verted, and entered Paris with the Allies, his Legion of Honour dangling behind from his horse's tail. Seeing how unscrupulous he was, Talleyrand employed him as a spy. He stole the Queen of Westphalia's jewels in the forest of Fontainebleau, and said Talleyrand had ordered him to do it! He was condemned to imprisonment but escaped. He came to England: but returned to Paris in 1827 and slapped Talleyrand's face in the presence of Charles X in the cathedral of St. Denis. After that exploit he faded for a time from sight; became a spy for Louis Napoleon; and was, as I say, with his wife (who was eventually murdered by her brother—a crime which made a great noise at the time) an *habitué* of the salon of the Duke of Brunswick. This is a case of *ab uno disce omnes.*

The old Duke always told Fleury that he intended leaving his fortune to the Prince Imperial; and it is likely enough he would have done so, but for Sedan and the downfall of the Empire. There would be no kudos attached to enriching a Prince in exile, and so

the painted little mummy left it to the town of Geneva, where he is to be seen in bronze on horseback just where the Empress Elizabeth of Austria was murdered.

Talking of 'verting, Rouher, the very embodiment of Bonapartism, was originally of the Cavaignac party. The astute Jules Simon (whom I knew very well indeed, passing many weeks with him every year at Trouville and also seeing much of him in his very high up flat on the Place de la Madeleine) advised him to curry favour with Louis Napoleon. He followed this advice and was kindly received by the Prince President, who made his fortune. Rouher, whose daughter was famous for her beauty and kindness to the pleadings of passion, was a vile shot, and at Compiègne, where my cousin the Prince de la Moskowa was Grand Veneur, was a very dangerous companion when he handled a gun. There was a famous yarn of how, when he shot old James de Rothschild's favourite dog, and the Emperor smilingly explained that, while a bad shot at game, his friend was a good shot in the Chamber, Rothschild laughed and exclaimed: "Then I suppose he thought himself in the Tribune and mistook my poor pointer for Jules Favre!"

The Emperor told my father, on the occasion of the death of old Prince Metternich (about 1859) that he owed his life to that great diplomatist, and it came about in this way. When he and his mother and father (the ex-king Louis under the name of the

Comte de St. Len) were living in Florence he, Louis, and his elder brother took part in the Revolution, and were made prisoners at Forli. His elder brother Napoleon died of fever there, and Louis would certainly have lost his life had not his mother, Queen Hortense, written a letter to Metternich imploring clemency for her only remaining son; and Metternich, who in the old days had been one of the most ardent admirers of *la belle* Hortense, replied that he could not find it in his heart to refuse so charming a lady.

A man who used constantly to come to our house, though Heaven only knows why, for we all disliked him—including my baby self—was the very pompous old Marquis de Dreux-Brezé, of whom the old Comtesse Lambertye truly said: "Il n'est ni Dreux ni Brezé." He was the most meddlesome man in the universe, always intruding with his views and advice even when he hardly knew the people to whom he was giving his unwanted attention; and moreover changing his attitude in the most comic way merely to have some semblance of an excuse for his impertinence. For example he was very religious and orthodox if talking to a Freethinker; cynical, not to say atheistical, if conversing with a sincere Christian; worldly if talking with a philanthropist; altruistic and high-minded if speaking with a worshipper of the Golden Calf—and so forth and so on—not all things to all men in the Pauline sense—but something contrary to every man just for the sake of lecturing

him, and airing his vast knowledge. For without doubt he was a very clever and well-informed bore, and it was almost worth one's while to submit to his most gross and uncalled-for interference in your affairs merely to hear what he had to say in the way of advising and admonishing you. Here is a very funny example. He met at our house a very clever South American financier, Mendez Léal (a cousin of the well-known diplomatist of that name), who had a letter of introduction to me from Salamanca in Madrid and who came to Paris to make "a corner" in something—I don't remember what—but who eventually, as is often the case in such ventures, found himself very much in a tight corner for lack of a few paltry ready millions. Dreux-Brezé was with us one afternoon when the South American called, but was not introduced to him. He was talking to my mother and some other people while Mendez Léal was telling me in quite a low tone about the wonderful monopoly he was going to secure for himself and his associates. I had no idea that the inquisitive Marquis was listening; but I saw him leave the ladies, go to a table and write, and then when he had done, fold up the paper, put it in his pocket and rejoin the group he had just left. Presently he took his departure, and after saying good-bye to me, he turned to Mendez Léal, bowed and said: "Forgive me, sir, but I could not help hearing what you were saying to our friend here: and I feel it incumbent on myself as a Catholic to point out to you that to establish a

monopoly is a sin, and has been denounced as such by all the leading Fathers of the Church. No doubt you are not aware of this, so I have just jotted down from memory what some of the greatest of our holy men have said on the subject." Here he took out the paper and handed it to the amazed South American. "Please read this and pause before you take a step so unanimously condemned!" Then he bowed low and departed. All this took place more than forty years ago, but I kept this extraordinary document, and here is a greatly abridged copy of these quotations from Fathers of the Church, dashed off from memory in a crowded drawing-room where people were laughing and talking: and composed purely and simply to interfere in a matter which did not concern him in the least and which, indeed, it was a gross piece of impertinence on his part to make any remark about, inasmuch as it only came to his knowledge by listening to what was not intended for his ears. Here are a few; I omit many. They were, of course, written in French, but I translate them roughly.

"St. Ambrose says: 'God created all things in order that the enjoyment of them should be common to all, and that the earth should be the common possession of all. It is Nature therefore that has engendered the right of possession in common: and it is usurpation which has produced the right of proprietorship.'"

"St. Gregory the Great says: 'The earth is common to all men: it is in vain therefore that they count

themselves innocent who appropriate to themselves the good things God gave to all, inasmuch as by not sharing with others what they have received they become homicides.' "

"St. Jerome says: 'It is not without reason that the Gospel calls the world's goods "unjust riches," for their only source is in the injustice of men, one being able to possess them only by the ruin of the other. Wealth is always the fruit of theft.' "

"St. Basil says: 'The rich man is a thief. Are you not a thief who appropriate to yourself alone what you only received to give away and distribute to others? If you call a man a thief who steals another man's coat, should one give any other name to him who, without even any inconvenience to himself, can clothe a man who is naked, but who still leaves him in his nudity?' "

"St. John Chrysostom says: 'All you have a right to keep for yourself is simply what is necessary: all the rest is the property of the poor and helpless.' " And so forth and so on: ending up with a quotation from the Pope Leo XIII. Not the least extraordinary part of this most extraordinary broadside of patristic quotations is that they were not only accurate in their essence and meaning, but almost correct verbally. I gave the paper to my Dominican friend, Father le Boulanger, and he verified them. But all this display of erudition was purely and simply, as I say, evoked by a desire to interfere and give advice, and take an attitude opposed to the one assumed.

Had the South American financier been an ardent philanthropist earnestly seeking to dedicate his life to the welfare of his fellow beings, the Marquis would have overwhelmed him with cynical arrows from David to Schopenhauer. I told Salamanca how his friend had been assaulted by the Fathers of the Church led by Dreux-Brezé, and he was greatly amused.

Speaking of that strange personality, Salamanca, I have told in *Uncensored Recollections* how he committed suicide because, having everything the world could give, he found life tasteless and monotonous; and I remember now, as I write, a ridiculous incident connected with him. He was a tireless Don Juan, and being what is called a "multi-millionaire," an endless stream of perambulators ere long began wheeling towards him. What was to be done? No Crœsus could cope with such a cataract of cradles. The late Lord Dudley, one of the most lovable, kind-hearted of cynics, came to the rescue. "You have a webbed foot, haven't you?" he asked. Salamanca admitted the accusation. "Well," said Dudley, "That's your only hope. Let it be universally known that you refuse to take an interest in any child that hasn't got a webbed foot." The terrified profligate caught eagerly at the idea, and so for a time there was a slump in perambulators pushed his way; but soon a hideous revival began. No doubt some enterprising and outraged vestal contrived a "corner" in web-footed babes (possibly imported especially for the

Salamanca market) and the temporary remedy led to a formidable recrudescence of the scourge, for as this special malformation in an infant had been insisted on as absolutely indispensable in forming some faint clue to possible paternity, so now the presence of it was loudly proclaimed by the wheeler of each perambulator to be an indisputable proof that the dissolute Dives was indeed the father of the web-footed infant being wheeled to him for recognition and due baptism by cheque. Poor Salamanca had to fly from the Peninsula and come on to us in Paris; but here too web-footed babes soon began to appear, and he then dashed to London and took refuge with old Oppenheim, who knew well how to cope with paternity claims—who better? Our Ambassador in Madrid, Sir Francis Ford—the most delightful of men, who was so fond of dancing that he was said to have waltzed himself to death, and whose son married one of the two charming daughters of Mrs. George Cavendish Bentinck *née* Livingstone of the U.S.A. (the other married Walter Burns), used to tell with great glee the story of poor Salamanca and his flight from the web-footed cloud of locusts that sought to devour his golden sheaves. But on the occasion of this visit of his to Paris, and before his flight to London, poor Salamanca got into very bad company, became mixed up with a band of pleasure seekers, pretty women, and unscrupulous financial schemers who deprived him of even more plumage than the web-footed babes could have done. The

moment it got to be known that Salamanca was in Paris, they all made a dead set at him: the Vicomte de la Gueronnière, Senator and Director of *La France;* Leopold Lehon, son of Morny's *chère amie* the witty Countess of that name who lived in the little pavilion known as "La Niche à Fidèle" adjoining the Duke's palatial *hôtel* on the Champs Elysées; and last but not least the well-known Marquis de Rouville, nicknamed the Mouche du Coche, because he was never quiet but always on the go, and mixed up with most of the intrigues in banks and boudoirs. Mocquard befriended de Rouville; the Pereeire financed *La France* through him: Achille Fould employed Rouville in numberless speculations: he went in and out of the Tuileries like a tame cat: and was a most amusing guest at any dinner party composed of men only, for he had an apparently inexhaustible fund of the most extraordinary and scandalous anecdotes, all absolutely true, for as he said once laughingly to Achille Fould: "I haven't the time to lie," a witticism worthy of Disraeli and which Dumas *fils* made use of many years later in "L'Étrangère." I remember particularly (among very many other similar yarns from his thin cynical lips) his very interesting and piquant story of how he was the go-between and figurehead when the kind-hearted Emperor, in memory of old London days of exile, enriched Miss Howard, whom he created Comtesse de Beauregard, with the concession to build the Palais de l'Industrie in the Champs Elysées. Of course,

this could not be done openly and in the name of the lady, so Rouville acted as the man of straw in this strange deal by which Miss Howard and her son (afterwards created Comte de Bêchevet, whom I knew well) by a livery stable-keeper at Cambridge, became the richer by over two million francs—£80,000, in those days. Rouville, la Gueronnière, Laurent d'Escourt (Syndic of the Agents de Change in Lyons), and Greninger of the Crédit Mobilier, knowing the amorous propensities of Salamanca, set a trap to catch him and to lead him into a quarrel with Baron Soubeyran who just then was a star of the first magnitude in the financial firmanent of La Ville Lumière. The Baron was madly in love with that exquisitely beautiful and graceful ballerina of the Opera, Eugénie Fiocre, but that artful angel (counselled so to do by the famous Dr. Veron—Mimi as he was called) kept him waiting, since hope deferred maketh the cheque thicker. Salamanca was brought to see her in "Nemea," where, a maddening dream of beauty, she appeared as a statue. The sight was too much for Salamanca, who instructed Isabelle of the Jockey Club to tell the dancing divinity he would send her a blank cheque to fill in if his webbed foot might hope to climb her balcony. Isabelle betrayed him, and on her way to Fiocre told Soubeyran, who forbade her to give the message and let Salamanca know through Achille Fould, who just then was studying the chart of Cyprus with Polly Skittles, whom he had wrested

from an Englishman named Aubrey de Vere Beauclerk, that he would ruin him if he persisted in his pursuit of Fiocre. Rumours of more web-footed babies arriving just then from the Peninsula, Salamanca reviewed the situation and prudently withdrew to the sheltering arms of Oppenheim on dismal Thames-side.

Eugénie Fiocre only died a few years before the war. She was very well off, and aspired to marry an "English Milord"—a Duke for choice. Seeing me one day on the racecourse at Chantilly with the very tall Lord Pembroke, she asked me if I knew an English duke who would be willing to gild his strawberry leaves with her £8,000 a year; but at the moment I had no such biped in view.

CHAPTER IV

I KNEW the last Lord Wallscourt but one very well. "Chuck," as he was called, was a good-looking fellow in the Coldstream Guards. I often dined with him "on the Bank" when he happened to be in command of the detachment guarding the old Lady of Threadneedle Street, and in connection with this I recall an incident which shows that if Chuck Wallscourt had not the brains of an Isaac Newton, he at least possessed no little presence of mind. Ladies are not permitted to dine "on the Bank," but a lady who was fascinating Chuck at the moment (her name was, I think, Paquita and she was quite a celebrity in the Bohemian world of London in those days) having had her hair cut short to appear in a burlesque, it occurred to Wallscourt that he would dress her as a man and have her to dine with him at the home of Plutus. He did so. At first all went well. Paquita made a very handsome youth, and the guardsman who waited on them had no reason to suspect her sex. But when dinner was over and Chuck and his fair guest were alone together, he pulled Master Paquita on to his knee and their lips met, just as Chuck's batman opened the door, looked in and as quickly closed it again and retreated. Here was a crisis demanding

quick thought and immediate action. Wallscourt sprang to his feet, rushed after his servant, dragged him back, convinced him of Paquita's sex, and thus the situation was saved. Had Wallscourt lost his presence of mind and not acted as he did, he would probably have been branded for life as what Canler calls an *"anti-physitique."* Wallscourt married first the very delicate Lady Jane Stanhope who died of consumption, and his mother was the beautiful Miss Lock of Norbury Park, near Dorking, a place which the heavy and somnolent American statesman, Charles Sumner, described as "one of the most beautiful country-seats in England,"—an absurd remark which shows that the great Abolitionist knew but little of our "stately homes." I have called him heavy and somnolent, and he was both. He was a very big man and was always falling asleep. He fell asleep at the dinner table at our Embassy in Washington while dining with Lord Lyons, much to the amusement of George Sheffield, Fenton, Kennedy, and Eliot. As a matter of fact, he never really recovered from the terrible attack made on him in the House of Representatives by Preston Brooks, a Southerner and slave owner who belaboured him over the head with a loaded cane. Sumner was seated at a table which was fastened to the ground, and as the big man rose in his agony his knees drew up the table.

Speaking of the presence of mind of Lord Wallscourt in a moment of great peril, I am happy to be

able to remember that my own brain was no less nimble in circumstances not wholly dissimilar. When quite a young man I was staying at the country seat of a well-known peer, whose wife was famous for her beauty, and one of the rising and most brilliant statesmen of the day whom I knew very well was of the house party. One evening, finding myself dressed for dinner rather early, I went to his room to have a chat; opened the door absent-mindedly without knocking, and found our hostess, a dream of ravishing beauty, in the arms of my friend, who, in his amorous impetuosity, had neglected to lock the door! Most lads of my age then would, I think, have closed the door and beat a hasty retreat, thereby, of course, making enemies for life of two prominent members of English Society. I did nothing of the kind. I took in the situation at a glance, went in, closed the door, put my back to it, burst out laughing! and in a second we were fellow-conspirators and friends for life!

Reverting to the French nobility, there are many legitimate bearers of authentic and historic titles in France who are so poor that they would gladly, not only marry for money, but even adopt anyone with cash and bestow on him (or her) his title, for such a transfer can be made legally in France. I could cite instances among the living, but for obvious reasons refrain from doing so, and will content myself with speaking of a man whom I knew well, who was

almost penniless, who was the legitimate holder of one of the best of French titles, and who has now passed over the Stygian stream—the Duc de Miromesnil. When I knew him he was an old man, and, as I have said, almost penniless, living in a little back room in the rue de Vaugirard; but in his youth he had had a small fortune which he lost in speculation on the Bourse. An American widow whom I knew well, and who was very rich, was anxious to marry a really authentic French nobleman and I suggested this poor old Duke (who, by the way, had been introduced to me by another shabby old hanger-on at the Café de la Paix who was glad to do any little odd job for a few francs, who thought it great fun to ask me "How's your young friend, Victor Hugo?"—he, the inquirer, being five years senior to the poet, as quick and nimble as a lad of twenty, and who was no other than the father of "le brave" General Boulanger) and she made his acquaintance, driving up herself in her carriage to the Café de la Paix, having the old Duke brought out to her by the well-known head-waiter René, and driving away with the noble pauper. She had the authenticity of his title carefully looked into, and would certainly have married him but for the fact of his dying suddenly—falling dead in the Rue Contrescarpe. "What a pity!" she exclaimed when she heard of the tragic occurrence. "If he'd only been a few hours dying, I might have married him and been a duchess without the bother of having a duke to look after."

This very matter-of-fact lady married shortly afterwards an Italian nobleman, but he was nothing like such a splendid prize as poor old ragged, wheezy Miromesnil. General Fleury used to tell a funny story about this poor but grand seigneur, at least so far as blood goes, who, it is hardly necessary to say, was an ardent Royalist and a devoted adherent in his younger days of the Comte de Chambord. When a young fellow of about five-and-thirty (shortly after the *coup d'état*) the duke was found by an enthusiastic supporter of Napoleon III reposing in the arms of the Bonapartist's wife. Nothing in the least tragic resulted: but the outraged husband refused to give back his breeches to the "wrecker of his home" until he cried: "Vive l'Empereur!" Fleury always swore that this was not merely a story but an absolute fact.

In *Uncensored Recollections* I have written of Mme. Alphonse de Rothschild, who was as generous and tender-hearted as she was fair and beautiful and who married her cousin, Baron Alphonse and presided over her sumptuous and hospitable salon in the great Talleyrand's old palace in the Rue St. Florentin; and I told of her delicate sympathy with all suffering, a sympathy which went far beyond the mere signing of cheques. As a matter of fact, Mme. la Baronne was as untiring in her service for others as was the late Lord Burnham. It was to her that I owe becoming acquainted with the famous actress Déjazet. The famous Virginie was very old, and had fallen on evil days. Mme. de Rothschild begged

me to find out exactly the real state of affairs, for she knew I was intimate with the octogenarian Vicomte de Grente, who, in the days of Louis Philippe, had been one of the great actress's most ardent admirers and still remained her friend although he could not do much to help, his own purse being none too heavy. Without giving any reason for so doing, I asked de Grente to introduce me to the great comédienne who had delighted four generations with her marvellous impersonation of male characters and who, among other memorable things, had produced Rachel and invented Sardou. Déjazet had all her life long been the most tender-hearted and charitable of women, and I remember the Prince de Sagan telling me how one night in the early 'fifties when he was a young "gandin" and was seeing Déjazet through the snow from the stage-door of her theatre to her carriage, she stopped at the sight of a poor shivering woman clasping a baby in her arms, and not only gave her all the money she had, but took off her flannel petticoat, crying out, "Wrap the little one in that at once."

With a little diplomacy, I easily found out from Déjazet all that Mme. de Rothschild wanted to know, and the result I am glad to state was very satisfactory to the old actress.

By the way, it was by the advice of Mme. Alphonse de Rothschild that Verdi gave up his rights in all his delightful compositions to the asylum for old artists which he founded in Milan. It was also in accordance with the advice of Mme. la Baronne

that Aristide Boucicaut left his millions and his gigantic establishment in the Rue du Bac to his employés. As Mme. de Rothschild's brilliant intellect and great ability in organising big schemes were as well known as her broad, tender, and sincere philanthropy, most people who desired to benefit their fellow beings on a generous scale went to the Rue St. Florentin for advice.

As my readers may ere this have gathered, I, when a blushing boy, was a conceited little chicko, and this puppyistic vanity was, of course, greatly increased by my having, when a mere child and boy, been brought into contact with men and women of great prominence, and by the kindness with which they treated me. As I have already said, the idol of my youth (and my idol to-day) was Dizzy, and the reddest of red-letter days in my career was the one on which I was brought to Grosvenor Gate by Edward Lord Derby (uncle of the present peer) to be introduced to the author of *Coningsby*—"the disappointed are always young" day, as recounted in *Uncensored Recollections*. But there were lesser lights who warmed my vanity in their friendly rays, and among these I must mention Lord Cardigan, if only for the sake of recording his opinion of Tennyson's "Charge of the Light Brigade." Lord Cardigan was an old friend of my family and knew me from my cradle. One day when I was up from my school I happened to be standing talking to Lord Clonmell

at the door of his house (now absorbed by the Junior Carlton, at the corner opposite what was then the War Office), when Lord Cardigan came out of the Rag, saw me, waved his stick and then came over to me (Clonmell hastily saying good-bye and departing—I never knew why). After inquiring after my father and mother, and asking me the usual idiotic question about how I liked my school (how can grown up people ask such silly questions and thus expose themselves to the well-merited contempt of their superiors and juniors?), the gallant Earl was proceeding on his way when I suddenly exclaimed, "Oh, I say, my lord! I was reciting something about you the other day!" "About me?" "Yes: 'Cannon to right of them: Cannon to left of them: Cannon in front of them volleyed and thundered!'" Here he interrupted me, holding up his yellow-gloved hand. "Please, please"—then with mock gravity, "Do you know Tennyson?" "No, my lord, but I should like to." "Well, if you ever do, you can give him my compliments and tell him he's written the most damned rubbish and infernal rigmarole even a poet was ever guilty of, and that he ought to be court-martialled for his clumsy ignorance!" "Oh, I shan't forget, my lord, if I ever meet him," I grinned. Then the handsome old hero and dandy smiled, said, "Don't forget! Good-bye," and left me.

Lord Cardigan had the reputation of being a very quarrelsome and quick-tempered man, and I dare say he was: but I always found him very kind and

agreeable, and he gave me, on my fourteenth birthday, in Paris, a white whalebone riding-whip mounted in silver with my initial which I prized very highly, for he had had it sent over to me from his own stick and whip-maker in London. That he was a martinet in his regiment I think very likely, but that he was cruel to his men, as old Lord Cork used to say, I feel sure is untrue, for Lord Cardigan was essentially a gentleman, and, while perhaps a trifle too haughty and abrupt in his manner with his equals, was very kind and considerate to those beneath him and to children. In this connection I may chronicle a fact little known, but told me by my father, so I know it must be true. At the beginning of the Crimean War, Lord Cardigan himself went round to all the cottages on his estate wherein he had enlisted men and promised the women folk to provide for the widows and mothers the war might leave desolate; and he kept his word with extreme and even lavish generosity.

Another very formidable character in history, but very kind and gentle personally, was the famous Von Moltke, whom I loved in my boyhood, but hated later when the vile Huns invaded my dear France. The great strategist who, up to 1867, never came to Paris without paying us long visits which were always most welcome, was a very quiet and simple man and very fond of children. His wife was English, but I don't remember much about her. Von Moltke, who was a very religious and very humane man, was

a perfect gentleman, in this respect the antithesis of Bismarck. For example, Bismarck, during the war of 1870, wanted to shoot all captives from balloons: and poor Worth, the dressmaker, once found himself in a very perilous position. His balloon had landed him near the enemy's camp, and Bismarck insisted on having him shot, but Von Moltke intervened and saved the life of the Lincolnshire genius, thus enabling him to make many more beautiful dresses for ladies lovely and the reverse. The great *couturier* was never tired when peace came of telling the story of his hairbreadth escape, and I really think he believed it to be one of the most important incidents of the war.

Many a time have I heard Worth tell his amusing yarns about the ladies he honoured with his patronage, and how very often he would be forced to write the richest of them before they could be brought to realise they could not be immortalised by him for nothing. One lady, a Scottish peeress, whose husband was famous for his wealth and for having been the original of a celebrated work of fiction, never would dream of paying until legal proceedings were begun, and, as Worth explained, this meant great extra expense for her, and delay for him: for the debt having been recognised by French law would have to be Caledonianised, so to speak, and the papers served on the noble lady in the land o' Rabbie Burns. But her ladyship didn't mind in the least. She would not pay until she was compelled to do

so; then she settled up at once legal expenses and all without a murmur and would begin immediately running up a fresh bill for a few more thousands of pounds at Worth's establishment. She bore not the slightest malice, and fully recognised there was only one Worth in the world. This farce went on, I believe, for years—indeed until the death of the great dressmaker.

CHAPTER V

I HAVE told in *Uncensored Recollections* of my introduction to Emile de Girardin by Renan and of my knowing hardly anyone at the first of his Sunday receptions in February—the Political, on which occasion he introduced me to Gambetta. On the succeeding Sundays, his diplomatic, literary, artistic, and purely social receptions, I found myself more at home and among friends, and justified in some measure the truth of what I had said to the great Emile, namely, that I knew nearly half *Tout* Paris. On one of these evenings—the artistic—I heard for the last time that marvelous, that incomparable artist Thérèsa. I had heard her innumerable times before; in my childhood I knew all her most famous songs by heart: "Rien n'est sacré pour un Sapeur," "La Femme à barbe," "Les Canards," etc., but, as she had retired, I had not, of course, heard her for many years; and on that evening at de Girardin's she had come at the earnest request of her old friend and merely to please him and enjoy once more (and almost for the last time in her life, I think) the enthusiastic applause which her singing never failed to evoke from all who heard her, from the street boy to the most highly cultivated and difficult to please

of virtuosos. People who have only heard Yvette Guilbert—good as she is—have really no idea of the depth of power and pathos of the chanson when interpreted by an artist of extraordinary talent like Thérèsa. And here I should like to say a few words concerning this most remarkable woman and her songs. The general impression that she was intensely *canaille;* that what she sang bordered on the obscene, and that the fact of her having become such a favourite towards the close of the Second Empire that leaders of society, like Princess Pauline Metternich, sent for her and took lessons from her is a proof of the low state of morality in French Society at that time, is utter rubbish. Not one of the songs ever sung by this great artist was in the least degree improper, much less obscene: nor was her method of singing or her gestures *canaille,* although, of course, as all her chansons were concerned with the working classes, and she interpreted them as one of that class herself, neither her tone of voice nor her manners were those of a Lady Clara Vere de Vere warbling an inane song by, say, "Claribel." Thérèsa was essentially a "femme du peuple," and sang as such about the affairs of people of that class; but there was nothing suggestive of the obscene in word or gesture even when she sang how nothing is sacred to a sapper, or yelled at you to come in and see the Bearded Woman. Madame de Metternich being herself a woman of keen and delicate artistic sympathies and appreciation, saw at once the extraor-

dinary talent of this "woman of the people" and it amused this very "great lady" to learn from this very great artist the ways, expressions, and manners of the working world, just as it amused many Princes of Royal blood to learn the argot of the Paris underworld. It was as amusing to see Madame de Metternich throw her arms about and yodel like Thérèsa, as it was to hear the Duke of Edinburgh assume the snarl of the Quartier Mouffetard and use the language of a *voyou*. In neither case was there the least suggestion of anything improper, or even vulgar; they were merely harmless attempts of the highest in the social scale to imitate the lowest, just for the fun of the thing—that and "nothing more," I may say, with all the emphasis of Edgar Poe's Raven. Thérèsa (her real name was Emma Valadon) was discovered by the incomparable Darcier (drunkard and genius, and author, *inter alia,* of "La Tour St. Jacques," and "Mon Petit Neveu"), and was made prominent at first by the great praises bestowed on her in that funny "Parnassiculet Contemporain" of Paul Arem, and others, which accorded to the newborn schools of Poets of the Passage Choiseul the supreme consecration of Parody. Darcier was, like his "discovery," Thérèsa, a very great artist; and, dirty, drunken fellow though he was, even the great Faure (a most charming and unaffected man, by the way)—the Master of "bel canto," Don Juan, Hamlet, Nelusko,—hardly ever ventured on a new rôle at the Grand Opéra without asking this ragged Bo-

hemian's advice. Taught by Darcier, and boomed by the clever and witty broadsheet referred to, Thérèsa very soon had all Paris at her feet—the Court, the *grand monde,* the literary and artistic world—even the most respectable and pompous Louis Veuillot. The modulations and inflexions of her voice (a rich contralto of great compass) were wonderful, and her personality most extraordinary and arresting. Plon Plon is reported to have said:

"Give me ten thousand rifles and Thérèsa, and I'll make but one mouthful of my cousin at the Tuileries." This after hearing her sing her famous yodelling song:—

"Quand les canards s'en vont en tas—"
"C'est qu'ça leur plaît—ça n'nous regard' pas."

When I heard her for the last time that night at Girardin's (by the way, she never wore gloves after the Emperor told her she had nice hands), her voice was beginning to decline. She no longer kept "les ours sur la montagne," or, as St. Victor puts it, "la grande cloche était alors ouatée," but still what an extraordinary performance it was after all. I have never seen one even approaching to it since, and I have seen and heard most of the great singers and actresses for the last quarter of a century at least. At first she gave us "La Tour St. Jacques," which is merely the story of a working lad putting on his best, his Easter clothes, to meet his adored sweetheart, and

how she scorned him and broke his heart. I can hear Thérèsa now:—

"Il faisait un temps radieux;
Le ciel était sans voiles;
Mais pour moi qui voyait ses yeux
Qu'importaient les étoiles?

"Tout mon cœur frissonnait d'amour
Dans mes habits de Pâques,
De la voir cheminer autour,
Tout autour de la Tour
St. Jacques."

And then the deception discovered, the love-dream shattered: the piteous awakening, the broken-hearted wail:—

"And what availed it to have put on my Easter clothes"

to

"Faire le tour,
Tout autour de la Tour
St. Jacques?"

No pen can adequately describe the heartrending pathos with which Thérèsa enriched these trivial words; there was hardly a dry eye in the room, and dear Mme. Alphonse de Rothschild put her arms round my cousin (a Jewess, and only my cousin by marriage), and they both sobbed in unison. And then our heart-strings were destined to receive a harder tug. Thérèsa gave us her song of the soldier lad and the old woman who was so kind to him, and why she was kind to him:

"Le jour vient, le départ aussi;
Allons, adieu; mais qu'est ceci?
Mon sac est plus lourd que la veille.
Ah, bonne hôtesse! Ah, chère vieille,
Pourquoi tant me gâter? Pourquoi?"
"Et la bonne vieille de dire,
Moitié larme, moitié sourire,
'J'ai mon gas,—soldat comme toi!'"

Mme. de Rothschild and the Duchess wept still more profusely, and nearly all eyes grew more moist. Then she gave us the "Été de la Saint Martin," in which she says good-bye to her songs; and then finally, the sublime "Terre" of Jules Jouy. As we men all stood breathless behind the seated ladies, and as the last words died away, I felt someone standing beside me clutch my arms; and turning I saw Saint Saëns, the tears rolling down his cheeks.

"What a genius! what a genius!" he murmured, as amid a torrent of applause, Thérèsa nodded graciously to everyone, and took Girardin's arm, to be led to her seat, to hear Taffanel play the flute.

Speaking of Taffanel, the great flautist, reminds me that in those days in Paris there were four things which no ordinary tourist could hope to enjoy. One was a visit to the Foyer de la Danse at the Grand Opéra. Admission to this inner shrine of Grace and Beauty could not be obtained by money,—that is, by money unaided by influence. A golden key was given to the chief boxholders (we had, for Friday nights, one of the big boxes "entre colonnes," with a salon at the back) and to a very limited number of

orchestra stall-holders. In the Foyer de la Danse were to be found the ladies of the corps de ballet, and along the wall were little pedestals about 3½ feet high: and while one of these dainty damsels would be chatting and laughing with you, she would perch one dainty foot on one of these pedestals (to keep in trim the muscles of that leg), and stand like a lovely and delicious stork in front of you until she thought fit to perch up the other leg in the place of the one she had just lowered—always remaining the lovely and delicious stork, but on a different understanding. This inner shrine of loveliness and grace had of course its *habitués*. Most of the young millionaires of Paris, headed by some of the male members of the Rothschild family, young and old, were always there: as were, when in Paris, the Prince of Wales, the Duke of Edinburgh, and the late King George of Greece, who was a great and experienced judge of grace and loveliness, and one of the most unassuming and delightful of men. By the way, this very charming Sovereign had the head of an astute Semitic financier on his shoulders, and the many clever people, men and women—and there were very many—who tried to get the better of him invariably failed most ignominiously.

"Je ne vois pas cela; je n'y comprends rien," was his favourite utterance, when some splendid scheme for the sure and immediate gain of many millions would—of course supported by mountains of eloquent and specious mendacity—be submitted to him.

Only once I believe was his Hellenic Majesty in a manner defrauded, and that matter had to be rectified at once. King George had bought some very beautiful turquoises from a leading Paris jeweller, and sent them to the lady who for the time being ruled his heart, but, shortly after his return from Athens, this lady wrote to tell him that the turquoises were changing colour. I don't suppose the Greek Minister in Paris ever had very much to do, but I know that at that time Prince Ypsilanti, who represented Greece in the French capital, busied himself chiefly with boudoir business; and such being the case, his Royal master used him to some extent, as it were, as a Leporello. He lived in the Avenue de Messine, only a few doors from the house where, in the salon presided over by Mme. Aubernon de Nerville, I used to meet Alexandre Dumas *fils*. One day, after breakfasting there with the son of Monte Cristo, I looked in on leaving at the Greek Legation, and found Ypsilanti in a great state of excitement. He had just received a letter from his Sovereign telling him about the turquoises, and ordering him to have the matter put right at once—"sans perdre un instant" were the words of his Majesty's injunction. The poor Prince didn't know what to do, as it so happened he owed this very jeweller a considerable sum of money, could not pay him for the moment, and so naturally did not want to rouse the sleeping lion with a red-hot poker. He was so agitated—the situation was one Labiche would have delighted to utilise for

one of his delightful farces—that he almost wept as he walked up and down the room, wringing his hands and exclaiming "Que faire? Que faire?" I did my best to keep from laughing, and tried to comfort him, and eventually succeeded in pacifying him by explaining that the jeweller in question had been ours for two generations, was the most honest and trustworthy of men, so that as this matter of the turquoises could be nothing but the result of a pure accident, he could not, and would not, be displeased to have it brought to his notice, so that he might rectify it. The result was that Ypsilanti and I went on to the jeweller's together, and everything took place just as I knew it would: the man was glad to have the opportunity of rectifying an accident that would have lost him the patronage of so lavish a purchaser of jewels as his Hellenic Majesty; explained that the disease which sometimes alters the colour of turquoises cannot be foreseen; and offered to change the stones for others or refund the money. The lady chose the latter alternative, the diseased stones were returned, and a cheque was sent to her. I remember the exact sum, £3,200, for Ypsilanti said with an envious sigh:

"I wish it were for me!" to which I might very heartily have replied in the language of the London street boy, "Same as that!"

The second thing no ordinary tourist would have an opportunity of enjoying was one of the Sunday concerts at the Conservatoire. The concert-room is a very small one, and access to these wonderful

concerts is almost more difficult than to the Foyer de la Danse. Here again the millionaires—the Rothschilds and others of that golden flower—preponderate, and very naturally, too, for money is almost, if not wholly, omnipotent after all. As for the concert itself, I doubt if music so perfectly interpreted can be heard elsewhere. Every member of the orchestra is a celebrity; here is Taffanel, with his famous silver flute; here is Sarasate with his marvellous violin; here is—but all the Gods of the Olympus of Music are there, seated humbly in the orchestra as if mere ordinary musicians. To hear Beethoven interpreted by these giants all together is a delight almost as difficult to enjoy as it is, if enjoyed, to forget, and an *entrée* to this Temple of Harmony is not obtained solely by money. The other two things which it was almost impossible in those days for any ordinary tourist to enjoy in Paris are now wholly impossible, inasmuch as in each case the chief object of interest has left this planet for ever. One was to hear Gounod sing: the other to hear and see Sardou at a rehearsal of one of his own plays. It was always an old joke when any one boasted he knew Gounod well to say:

"Have you heard him sing?"

"No."

"Then you can't know him well."

"But I didn't know he could sing."

"Well, he can't; but if you'd known him well, he'd have sung for you all the same."

And so it was: Gounod could not sing—had no voice at all; and yet, oh! Beethoven, Mozart and Palestrina, how he sang! I have heard all the greatest artists sing the Serenade in "Don Giovanni," but very unquestionably (and this was the opinion of all who heard him, including Faure, Tamberlick, Tamagno, Muziani, and many others) Gounod interpreted—I dare hardly say sang, for he really had no voice—this dainty love song far better than it was ever done before. So with Schubert's "Serenade" and the "Ave Maria" and the "Adieu" by the same great composer. But marvellously as he "interpreted" these famous compositions, Gounod was perhaps at his best when "interpreting" his own works; and to hear him as Romeo or Faust was a sheer delight. And in this connection I have a curious story to tell. One morning when my mother and I were with him in his music room, in his palatial house in the Place Malesherbes, and he had been singing to us, accompanying himself on the organ, my mother spoke to him of a very beautiful composition of his, "Souvenir,"—not the hackneyed song by him bearing that title, but a very beautiful piece of music, the words by Jacques Collin, which is now, I believe, out of print, and which certainly deserves to be better known than it is, for it is quite one of the best things of its kind Gounod ever composed. The Maestro did not remember it quite at first—but then it all came back to him, words and music and the circumstances in which it was composed.

"I was poor and unknown then," he said, "merely the organist in the Missions Étrangères in the Rue du Bac. But I remember it now—I'll sing it to you —I must get a copy: it's one of the best songs I ever wrote."

And then he "interpreted" this gem. It begins with an invocation to Memory:—

"Toi qui réponds sans bruit"; then Memory comes; then at the close Memory gently passes away with the sad last words:—

"Je ne suis rien: mais je suis tout."

That morning, that song, and the way the great composer rendered it, I shall never forget.

Sardou presiding over a rehearsal of one of his own plays was a memorable sight, for he taught everyone—man, woman, or child—his or her part and just how to act it, no matter how famous or conceited the actor or actress might be. He would act each and every part himself—male and female and juvenile, and would insist upon it being done just as he did it, which, as a matter of fact, was always the right way. It was extraordinary to see this old man in his velvet skull cap, with a wizened face not unlike that of Voltaire, jumping about like a child, laughing and fanning himself like a young coquette, or making love with all the ardour of a youthful Don Juan. But Sardou was a very extraordinary man, quite apart from matters pertaining to the stage, or to literature. He was very superstitious, believed in dreams, and was a dabbler in the occult. He firmly

believed in talismans—or I might say mascottes—and eagerly seized on anything that savoured of the mystical and incomprehensible. For example, he bought a system (of course infallible) to win at Monte Carlo, from Garcia, the famous gambler, played it himself with unvarying success, and was kind enough to teach it to me. But I never made use of it, though Sardou assured me it had never failed him. I have it still, carefully written for me at Sardou's dictation by Edouard Pailleron, the author of so many delightful plays, and himself one of the most charming and lovable of men. Garcia, who sold and taught this "infallible" system to Sardou, was a very remarkable man, and his luck on the public gambling tables on the Continent has, as is well known, never been equalled. When he started his career, the maximum was only £480. He got an exclusive privilege to be allowed to stake each time £2,400, and left that season with winnings amounting to £80,000. The next season he made a clear profit of £120,000, and returned to Spain. But after a while he went to Baden-Baden, and was there, it was said, taunted into playing again by the Duc de Morny, and lost nearly his entire fortune. Then he came to Paris, when I was introduced to him by Carlo Hamilton. He was very popular at first; everyone knew him, and he sold and taught his system to no end of people; but eventually he became associated with the well-known impresario of the Italian Opera House, Torridio Calzado; and with him was caught cheat-

ing at cards. Garcia fled to Monaco: but Calzado was caught, tried, fined, and imprisoned at the instance of Queen Isabella of Spain, one of whose chamberlains had been the chief victim of these sharpers. Garcia died at Monaco, but as very many persons had made large sums by his system, he was fairly well cared for to the end, although never allowed to put his foot in the Casino or indeed in any gambling place. Captain Machell took care of his only child—a daughter, and a very pretty girl—and I believe he married her to a rich wool merchant.

CHAPTER VI

ONE, certainly one of my very earliest friends of note, inasmuch as our mutual attachment began when I was a mere baby, was Lord Ward, afterwards Lord Dudley, father of the present Earl and husband of one of the most lovely and lovable ladies of her day, Georgina Countess of Dudley, who is still with us. Whatever made the late lord of beautiful Witley not only like me as a child, but absolutely "chum up" with me when I reached years of (in)discretion, and remain my friend until his lamented death, I cannot say, possibly it was my unbounded "cheek"; impatience of hypocrisy and everything savouring of "pose"; sense of humour and general independence of character. I think perhaps the sight of the intimate friendship I enjoyed with a man almost old enough to be my father—the late Duke of Hamilton—may possibly have led Lord Ward to think somewhat in this wise—"If that boy is the chum of Angus Hamilton, why should he not be mine? Anyway I'll try. It will be a change from the depressingly uniform stupidity of the average fully grown ape to try to find amusement in the merry gambollings of this lively little monkey." So he threw out the lasso of friendship to the smiling little Simian, caught him, and the kindly cord of attachment was only loosened by death. A more profoundly clever man than the

late Lord Dudley I never knew, and I use the word "profoundly" intentionally, for his cleverness not only frequently expressed itself in witty remarks, but was a deep well of knowledge of men, women, and things collected, selected, examined, sifted, tested by keen observation and wide experience, and then stored away for the use of such friends as he cared to help with it. It was not the universal and encyclopædic knowledge of the G.O.M. or of Plon Plon. Dear old Lord Dudley probably knew nothing about Chinese literature; was doubtless wholly ignorant of Roumanian folk lore; and knew far more about the value of different vintages than about Kant's Theory of Time and Space, or the Nebular Hypothesis. But he could (and to me, did) give helpful advice in matters the very mention of which would have made the author of "Ecce Homo" blush all over. And oddly enough, Lord Dudley's advice was generally of an actively negative character, if I may so express myself. He rather told you what *not* to do, than what to do, being well aware that pleasant passivity, partly perhaps perfumed with penitence, is not only usually more safe, but more apt to be a prescription of practical value than the counsel to take up any arms against any sea of trouble. "Let celerity be contempered with cunctation," was a favourite theory of Lord Dudley, and he was constantly quoting La Fontaine's

"Rien ne sert de courir, il faut partir à temps,"

which, by the way, was intensely comic coming from him, for he was famous for his want of punctuality, was always late (nearly caused a scandal by being very late at the Coronation of the ex-Kaiser's grandfather), and in fact used to say himself—"I'm afraid I shall only be punctual once in my life—at my funeral."

His enemies (and of course he had many as all very rich and very clever men have) used to say he was profligate, selfish and a cynic. They either spoke in ignorance or in malice. No more truly, even tenderly, good-hearted man ever lived, and no man so endowed can be properly labelled a cynic in the true sense of the word: although, of course, his wide knowledge of men, keen sense of humour, quick wit, and caustic tongue fairly equipped him to be the associate of Timon, Diogenes and the melancholy Jacques. And this mixture of merry juvenility and listless indifference, reclining on a cushion bespangled with wit subduing the latent sneer, was one of the not least extraordinary characteristics of this most extraordinary man. He really had the heart of a child, but you had to know him very well to realise this great and beautiful secret. And to illustrate this latent juvenility in this man, whom the ignorant and foolish dubbed a cynic—a rich Voltaire, as it were, with the experience of a de Lauzun—I should like to say just one word on a delicate subject, and I realise that it must be a word lighter than a gossamer to avoid giving offence. When the lord of Witley

married the not least beautiful of the lovely Moncrieff girls, spiteful and envious people said: "Oh, what a sacrifice! How awful! How lamentable a union between so wintry a January and so sweetly sun-kissed a May!" And when the veil was being fastened on the beautiful head of the young bride, many of those present shed tears! What utter rubbish! Often in a ball-room when, though far apart, their eyes would meet, this Romeo—a boy at heart though not in years—and smiling Juliet would contrive to get near each other for a moment just to touch hands—one gentle touch as eloquent of love as any song sung by nightingales in Verona.

His wit was famous, and indeed not a few of the good things attributed to others were really his. For example, he said once laughingly to Napoleon III when breakfasting with him alone at the Tuileries, and after his Majesty had been (as was his wont when alone with personal friends whom he could trust) airing some of his views of the old Carbonaro days: "Forgive me, Sir, but I can't for the life of me imagine how you can possibly hope for your Government to get on!" "How's that?" inquired the Emperor. "Why the Empress is Legitimist; Morny is an Orleanist; Prince Napoleon is a Republican; and your Majesty is a Socialist. Only Persigny is an Imperialist, and he, as we all know, is a madman!" The Emperor was greatly amused, and went about telling the story, always, of course, quoting the real author of this true jest; and so in the process of time

people began to fasten the remark on the Emperor himself. But that it was Lord Dudley who really said it I know to be a fact beyond dispute for the simple reason that his Majesty told my father so himself. As a matter of fact, the Emperor had a very ready wit of his own and by no means needed the adornment of borrowed plumage. Fleury—nothing by the way annoyed him more than to be called "de" Fleury, for he was absolutely without pose and like Persigny accurately to be described as a "jolly chap," only with much more refinement than the last named—used to recount with great glee, for he abhorred Plon Plon, how when the little Prince Imperial once asked his father the difference between accident and misfortune, the Emperor gravely replied: "Well, it's like this, Louis, if cousin Jerome fell into the sea it would be an accident, but if any one pulled him out it would be a misfortune." This, by the way, bears a striking resemblance to a favourite yarn of Finsbury Tom (Thomas Duncombe, the member for Finsbury) of how when Lord Malmesbury said to Lord Palmerston: "Mme. de Broglie was asking me the other day if there was any difference between occupation and business, and I said no. I was right, wasn't I?" "No," said the most cynical of Victorian Premiers, "you were wrong, quite wrong. There is a world of difference, and you of all men ought to know it." "How? I don't understand." "Why, see here, for example," said the genial host of Cambridge House, "the French are

occupying Algiers, but they've no business there, have they?"

Another instance of the ready wit of Napoleon III is well known. When Nicholas I replied to Louis Napoleon's letter announcing his assumption of the Imperial title, he called him "mon ami" instead of "mon frère," the customary way in which one Sovereign addresses another. This, of course, was an impertinence, and indeed was intended to be such. The fact was pointed out to his Majesty by Victor Fialin, Duc de Persigny, who, although the son of a tradesman himself, had made the usages and etiquette of Court his special study for the sake of the Prince to whom he was devotedly attached—he and Fleury being perhaps the only two true and real friends Louis Napoleon ever had from start to finish. "Oh! 'mon ami' is quite right, mon cher Persigny," said the Emperor with a smile, "indeed, it's far more flattering than 'mon frère,' for, as the saying is, we choose our friends, whereas we cannot choose our relations, can we?"

But to return to the late Lord Dudley. He had one most curious habit of asking himself a question out loud, and then answering it himself. The effect of this was sometimes excruciatingly funny, for his query, comment and reply to himself *à haute voix* on any current topic under discussion were often not un-Samson-like in their effect and "brought down the house." Here is an absurd incident to illustrate my meaning. There was an American professor of

some branch of science in some one of the many American Universities, who, from time to time, was to be seen in London. As a child I remember him well, for he was, I think, the tallest man outside a show or museum I ever met, and could have given "Ossy" Ames many inches. He must have been well over seven feet in height: clean shaven, very religious, and with a big, thin, hooked nose—so big and so hooked that I often thought it was this huge nasal arch that made him stoop. Always dressed in black, and with that pained yet placid look of resignation which usually proceeds from badly digested Christianity, he had been "breakfasted" by Lord Houghton, and so was not unknown in London. His name was Pyncheon, and it suited him down to the ground. His religiosity was of the absolutely juiceless order, wholly lacking the "unction" of Horace Greeley and Henry Ward Beecher—the calm chastity of a converted iceberg slightly pained by irreverent scratchings from sceptical Polar bears. Well, one morning at breakfast at our house, my father, the most innocent and pure-minded of men and the most guileless, said: "Whom do you suppose I met yesterday in the Champs Elysées? You never would guess."

"Who?" asked Lord Dudley.

"Pyncheon."

"Pyncheon! Why, good God! What can he be doing here?"

"That's just what I asked him," said my father,

"and he said he'd come to Paris to add to his physical apparatus!"

Silence followed; then Lord Dudley said to himself:

"Pyncheon's physical apparatus! Gad! How funny. What earthly use can he have for it, and what an odd place Paris to come to add to it! One would have thought—Should *I* come to Paris for that, if I needed it? No: I think not. Still no doubt he knows best. Those Boston professors are so clever: and perhaps Pyncheon's physical apparatus after all——" But just then G. P. R. James's eyes met those of my mother, and of Mrs. Charles Astor Bristed and of Henry Bulwer (afterwards Lord Dalling); the spark reached the gunpowder, and an explosion of laughter drowned the rest of Lord Dudley's open-voiced self-communion. But apart from these eccentric soliloquies, Dudley had quite a way of his own in summing up a situation. One of the most absolutely charming of *grandes dames* in those days in Paris was Mlle. de Tournon, an old maiden lady belonging to the *gratin* of the noble Faubourg, although as a matter of fact she inhabited a beautiful little *hôtel* of her own in the Rue de l'Arcade. Mlle. de Tournon had by some accident been crippled in childhood, but she was ever full of fun and the *joie de vivre*. She used to be carried on a mattress by two stalwart footmen in livery to her box at the Opéra and gave the most delightful and merry little breakfasts to her very select circle of friends. My

mother introduced Lord Dudley to her, and they became fast friends, the pungent wit of the charming lord of Witley greatly pleasing the little crippled lady, who, by the way, was aunt to that most popular member of Paris society, Philippe, Marquis de Croix, to whom she left all her fortune. One night at Mlle. de Tournon's box at the Opéra there happened to be among others a very handsome young Italian nobleman (I will not mention names, for he and his wife are both living) who, after having run through his large fortune, had been compelled to allow himself to be dragged to the altar by a very rich and very amorous lady from the United States. The passion of this trans-Atlantic millionairess for the good-looking little spendthrift whom she had bought and paid for liberally knew no bounds: her eyes shot volleys of kisses to him even in public, and her whole frame rocked with an inner combustion that would have frightened even Diesel himself. Of course, her husband had to put up with it, because he was liberally paid to do so; but the constant panting at his lips must have been fatiguing. That night at the Opéra, Gounod's "Faust" seemed to have added an enormous extra quantity of petrol to the Princess's heart: and so at last she rose, glanced at her spouse and said they must go home, her face positively twitching with "Da mi ancor" as she made the announcement and went to the salon at the back of the box to see about her cloak and things. The poor Prince looked crestfallen and embarrassed; the

laughing eyes of Mlle. de Tournon met those of Lord Dudley and mine, and as the disconsolate Prince wished the little crippled Countess good-night and slowly retreated, Dudley looked at him, affected to sigh, and murmured, "Chapelle Expiatoire!"

Then, one night at a ball given by Mme. de Gallifet in her beautiful house in the Rue Rabelais (it was the famous night when a very Illustrious Person got extraordinarily drunk; and, being locked up in the boudoir of the belle Marquise to avoid the scandal of being seen to leave the house so hopelessly entangled in *les vignes du Seigneur,* broke everything in the room) while the amorous Carlo Hamilton was pleading his suit with a very beautiful Russian lady who was as charitable with her charms as she was mercenary and witty, she said: "Well, I can't see you to-night: but to-morrow night you can squeeze into my box at the Opéra if you like." "I will indeed, Princess," said Carlo, who had Lord Dudley with him, "but it is into your heart I want to squeeze myself." She smiled and shook her golden head. "Pas possible!" she said, "my heart's like an omnibus on a rainy day—full up." "But can't you turn some of them out?" pleaded Carlo. The Princess shook her head. "Ah, no, I fear not." "All paid for their places, I suppose?" broke in Dudley. She smiled and nodded. "Ma foi, oui!" she assented. "Et bien —et l'impériale?" suggested the cynical peer.

His nimble wit was never dormant: always alert and missed nothing. Once when my mother in fun

called that tedious, clumsy *poseur* and man of straw, the former Prefect of the Upper Garonne, "M. de Faux Pas," he pounced on it at once and asked: "Do you mean with a 't' or an 'x'?" "Ma foi, tous les deux," broke in Mme. de Poilly. Like all sane men who have eyes and ears and a heart, he was very fond of children. I remember telling him, by way of illustrating the terrible and pitiless logic of the little ones, of what Mme. de Mouchy—beautiful Anna Murat—once told me about her two children. Her daughter, Sabine de Noailles, a lovely child who died very young, came into the nursery and said in a stage whisper to her brother the little Prince de Poix (he married the daughter of Mme. de Courval, *née* Ray of U.S.A., but died young) "Listen! I've got awful news! God is dead!" "What?" exclaimed the boy. "God is dead," repeated little Sabine. "God dead!" echoed the boy. "How do you know that?" "Why just now I went into Maman's boudoir and found her on the sofa crying, and when I asked her what she was crying for, she said we had just lost our best friend: and as, of course, you know God is our best friend, God must be dead! What shall we do now without God? Isn't it awful?" The little Prince, having recovered from his first shock of amazement, thought for a moment and then said cheerfully, "Well, I don't know that I think it very awful after all: for now you see, we can do as we please!" Lord Dudley was amused at this, but capped it with a story of how the little daughter of

the famous one-legged Lord Anglesey having heard her father give orders to have a mare shot, and it was explained that it was because she was old and lame, exclaimed, "Oh, Papa! when are you going to shoot Mama?"

Lord Dudley was rather fond of bringing in classical quotations: but I have an idea that his knowledge of the Greek and Roman authors was somewhat superficial and that his quotations from them were prepared beforehand. But be this as it may, they were as a rule singularly appropriate, as when speaking of an old bitter-tongued, backbiting peeress (who at one time amused Society by averring that to her certain knowledge the then Duke of Devonshire was a foundling boy substituted for a still-born girl, a grotesque statement she later on retracted in sackcloth and ashes), Dudley said: "She's like the Vesuvius of Pliny spitting up 'nigrique et ambusti et fracti igne lapides.'" It had been the custom in his youth to make puns and jests about passing incidents, and of this rather silly habit Dudley never wholly divested himself. For example, he always called that silly old Imperial Chamberlain, Count Bacciochi, who suffered from a most extraordinary nervous malady which compelled him to be forever on the move, never quiet, but walk, walk, walk until he would drop down with fatigue, the "M.P.," meaning "mouvement perpétuel." When Bacciochi heard of this and asked him one day at Boran where they were both staying with Mme. de Sancy de Parabère (one

of the lovely ladies in Winterhalter's famous picture of the Empress Eugénie and her *entourage* of fair women), what he meant by those initials, Dudley replied blandly: "Why, don't you know, mon cher Comte? Mentalité profonde, of course," which greatly pleased Bacciochi, who, as a matter of fact, was half-witted. Then again I met him one day in St. James's Street when he was on his way to call on that very delightful and active of *grandes dames* (galloping in the Park when past seventy!) the last Duchess of Cleveland, mother of the most thoroughly lovable of all Victorian Premiers. As we passed into King Street together we broke into a huge wave of Semitic experts and Art merchants on their way to Christie's, and they all bowed low to the lord of Witley, who gave a comic sigh and murmured to me: "You see, my dear boy, it's true what they say in the Te Deum, 'Abraham and his seed for ever.'" His reference to the wayward Countess—*chère amie* of Persigny, Morny, and others too numerous to envy—and her broad-minded husband as "M. le Hon, and Mme. La Honte," which I have mentioned elsewhere, is famous and historical.

He was a friend of the great Master of Balliol, Benjamin Jowett, and often ran down to stay the night at The Lodge with his fellow cynic. There is a story told, the truth of which I will not put my hand in the fire about, as the French say, of his finding his way one day, on the occasion of one of these chance visits to Isis-side, to the Oxford union. The

book for members to write their remarks, requirements and complaints in, was lying on the table, and Dudley carelessly took it up and read: "Why no *Punch* this week?" Under that someone else had written, "Why no *Fun* this week?" and under that, "Why no *Church Times* this week?" and under that, "Why no *Judy* this week?" and under that, "Why no *Rock* this week?" Dudley took up a pen, bracketed the lot together and wrote: "Why this dearth of comic papers?"

But often his wit went far deeper than such trivialities: his description to Laurence Oliphant (who told me the story himself) of Disraeli's great triumph and his prophecy of the inevitable reaction, are, I submit, worthy of Lord Chesterfield. "Lord Beaconsfield has taken John Bull to Cremorne, and the old fellow rather liked it; but there will be a morrow to the debauch!" Dudley was famous for his quiet common sense, self-control, and absolute calmness in situations where the absence of such valuable and rare qualities would have been, to say the least of it, awkward. Here is an almost entirely unknown incident which will illustrate my meaning, and which I know to be correct, for I had it from my father, to whom Lord Dudley himself told it. It was in the early days of the Second Empire, and Dudley had expressed to Lord Cowley his desire to inspect at a National Museum a famous Collection of coins and medals. The Emperor at once gave the necessary order, and the Prefect of the Seine was

with the Director of the Museum at the door of the Museum to welcome the company of distinguished visitors which included, besides Lord Dudley and Lord Cowley, Duke Ratibor, Baron de Beyens, and the Prince de Ligne. All at first went well: medals and coins of the greatest rarity and value were freely handed round for the inspection of this little coterie of distinguished connoisseurs. Finally, Lord Dudley expressed his desire to handle and examine very closely a gold coin of unique value reputed to be the only specimen in existence. It was in a glass case carefully locked; but, at the request of Lord Dudley, the Director of the Museum had the case unlocked and the coin handed to Dudley, who examined it very closely and passed it on to his friends, who finally restored it to the Director. That official, somewhat overcome perhaps by the rank and importance of his visitors, put the coin back in its place, but forgot to lock the glass case. Conversation continued and other objects of value were examined when suddenly the Director turned pale, staggered and exclaimed "Grand Dieu! Il n'est plus là!" The unique coin had disappeared! Great, of course, was the excitement; what was to be done? What had happened? No one but the illustrious visitors, the Prefect, and the Director himself had been near the case. Here good-natured Baron de Beyens made things much worse by suggesting that they should all be searched. The Prefect and the Director hesitated, but de Beyens insisted, and the others, with the exception of

Lord Dudley, laughingly consented to submit to examination. But when it came to the lord of Witley, he coldly and very decidedly refused. Lord Cowley, who himself had had all his pockets emptied now came forward and declared that as British Ambassador he felt it his duty to uphold his fellow countryman in his refusal to be examined, Lord Dudley all the while remaining cold and impassive and determined. There was nothing, of course, to be done; the visitors were bowed out and departed, everyone probably feeling sure that Dudley was the guilty man. But that evening the Director himself called in great excitement at the Hotel Bristol where Lord Dudley was staying to announce with joy that the missing coin had been found! It had slipped under the cushion in the case. Dudley congratulated him, and then condescended to explain why he had refused to be searched. The coin in question was not the only one in existence; there was one other, and one only, and that one Lord Dudley was the possessor of and had in his pocket when he had gone that morning to examine the other. Hence his refusal to empty his pockets and be examined! The Emperor, I believe, was greatly amused when he heard the story, and clumsy, bourgeois de Beyens very much blamed for ever having suggested anything so grotesque as a search, although really the person the most to blame was Lord Cowley, who, being highest in official rank there, ought at once to have repudiated any such nonsensical humiliation.

"A Fine Old Gentleman"

"There is no such thing," said Swift in his declining years, "as a fine old gentleman. If So-and-so had had either a mind or a body worth a farthing, they would have worn him out long ago." Certainly no one has a more sincere and even ardent admiration for the genius of the great Dean of St. Patrick than myself; but I venture to submit that in the above quoted opinion he is wrong; and, looking back very dispassionately at the charming personality of the old friend of my extreme youth, remembering his kindness, his wit, his never-tiring desire to prove his sincere affection for all whom he honoured with his intimate friendship, I feel I can safely contradict the illustrious lover of Stella and Vanessa, and point to the late Lord Dudley as being in very truth the type of a "fine old gentleman."

CHAPTER VII

NAPOLEON III said laughingly once, speaking of Carpeaux's famous group "La Danse," at the Grand Opéra House in Paris, which gave rise to so much criticism when first exposed, and at which a bottle of ink was thrown, "The days are past since Stanislas de la Rochefoucauld ordered drawers to be put on the statues of the Gods of Antiquity"; and Lord Beaconsfield said towards the close of his life, "The forms of nonsense have changed in this generation." And so it is: the trite truism enunciated in what is known as *The Dentist's Hymn*, "Change and decay in all around I see" (the Barrister's Hymn being, I am told, "Brief life is here our portion") is exemplified, of course, daily and indeed almost hourly. The Juliet who so eagerly helped Romeo up the balcony last night may be the most prudish and censorious of young ladies this morning. Agile and ambitious Anglicans amble over to the Scarlet Woman with all the vigour of a but newly-awakened conscience, contemptuously quitting cold, barren, schismatic Canterbury, and cautiously cantering across the Tiber in quest of a Cardinal's cape; and even statesmen—nay, even super-statesmen have been known to experience seismic disturbances in their views of what is most likely to be of the best advantage to the common-

wealth, changes strangely coincident with the ebb and flow of power and party, and apparently quite foreign to anything remotely resembling sincere conviction. But these are one and all mere surface changes, Disraeli, with his Semitic sorcery, finding the right words—"*forms* of nonsense," the basic nonsense remaining eternally the same. Now of this basic nonsense in things human one boulder that defies all shifting is a love for the rewards presumably given for merit or eminence of some kind—peerages, decorations, and such like; recognition of all and every kind from the Garter to a medal of the Humane Society. And this desire to obtain the recognition does not by any means in all cases imply a wish to deserve or earn it in the way it was originally intended such recognition should be obtained. There are, for example, plenty of suburban heroes from Upper Tooting to Kilburn who would greatly cherish a Humane Society medal, but who would not only shrink from getting into a puddle to save a drowning puppy, but could hardly deny themselves the pleasure of kicking a trespassing cat. How then can this thirst for honours be assuaged without all the provoking tedium of fighting *for* your country by land or sea; or braying *at* your country in Parliament; or soiling paper or canvas with ink or paint; or, in fact, indulging in any of the things for the successful performance of which Garters, dukedoms, Humane Society medals and free cinema passes are commonly supposed to be reserved? Belshazzar

begs for an answer to this question written in undying letters on the wall of human vanity, and Daniel whispers "Cash." The man or woman who sincerely believes that all decorations and titles and such like are won by merit, and that none of them is ever bought and paid for, is worthy of a place in the Cabinet of a Communist Ministry. As a matter of fact, such "baubles" *are* sold and bought both here and in France—have been, are, and will be—like cabbages, motor-cars, or the consciences of company promoters. That such is the case must indeed be obvious to anyone in his senses who takes the trouble to consider the matter for a moment. In what way can the concocting of patent medicines or toilet requisites, the distilling of spirits (to mention only a few out of the many trump cards we every day see winning the game) possibly be connected, even remotely, with any kind of merit deserving a reward higher than that of seeing a banking account rapidly increase in amount? But it is just the very bulk of this banking account, and the proportion of its size, that provokes the bestowal of here a peerage, there a baronetcy or knighthood. And not the least comic part of this eternal farce is that every now and then there is a loud outcry about it, as if about a scandal suddenly discovered—the loudest criers as a rule being the very ones who sold and bought the "honours" about which there is such a fuss. Then after the passing hubbub there is peace again, and the pleasing pastime, the subject of all this Pecksniffian

tumult, is quietly resumed. Sir Henry Hawkins, the late Lord Brampton, a harsh judge, but a very amusing man, whom I knew well, once said to me, with reference to a very flagrant instance of this trafficking in honours: "In England nowadays, my dear chap, the only two things a man must really deserve before he gets it are penal servitude and the Victoria Cross!" To which I replied, remembering the speaker's habit of inflicting the maximum penalty on any poor wretch before him in the dock: "Et encore! I'm not so sure about the first." Of course, it's "Very shocking," "Quite too dreadful," and "Must be put a stop to"; but for obvious reasons no serious alteration in the time-honoured wickedness is ever attempted: and all sorts and conditions of men get honours year by year by paying money into what is called the "Party Fund," just as a legislator seeking escape from St. Stephen's obtains it by applying for the Stewardship of the Chiltern Hundreds. In the old days it was done more openly: but shortly after the accession of Queen Victoria, when Pecksniff, Chadband, and Podsnap came into power, it was deemed advisable that such iniquities should be hidden from the man in the street, and so for the most part the general public now merely wonders how, say, pill, powder, soap, whisky, beer, or broadsheet comes to place a coronet on the heads of the producers thereof. But it was, is, and ever shall be, world without end.

As a rule it is (provided, of course, the amount of

the cheque be big enough to warrant its ranking with charity as a covering) not deemed necessary to look too closely into the private character of the bauble seeker, although, of course, his shortcomings must not be of public notoriety. Here is a well-known yarn about Beaconsfield. Sir John Holker once said to Dizzy, when they were sitting together in the House of Commons: "You know all those men well; I don't mean the Front Bench; we know more or less about it; I mean the men immediately behind. Tell me about them." Dizzy put up his eye-glass, looked along the bench and said, "Do you see that man? He is the greatest rascal living—I knighted him!"

There are at the present day in London Society three ladies who can and will help you to obtain what you may want in the way of an honour, provided, of course, you feel the necessity of helping the Party Fund. One of these ladies has been successfully playing this remunerative game for many years, since, indeed, the later years of Queen Victoria, and Colonel Owen Williams ("Ducky"), of the Blues, once laughingly told her she ought to have inscribed on her front door: "Please do not ring unless a Peerage is required." As for the Party whose fund is in need of your helping hand, it does not really matter which Party it is; every Party has a fund; and every such fund is there ready—on the penny in the slot system—to give you the honour you seek, provided you put the coin in. The fact being that these ladies to whom I refer as being always both willing and

able to help in such matters are well known in Society, it is naturally unwise for the more impecunious of those seated in high places to be seen frequenting their salons, lest haply they might be suspected of having a venal interest in the intrigues going on there; and not long before his untimely death handsome and charming Prince Francis of Teck got a terrible wigging for frequenting such contaminating social centres. But poor Frank Teck was never conspicuous for tact, and many years ago he incurred (and, of course, very properly) the ardent displeasure of Queen Victoria when she was told that he was going about telling, as a good joke, how he had heard a Jacobite at the Stuart Exhibition say, speaking of her Majesty: "The Queen? Oh, you mean Princess Albert of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha, I suppose."

But speaking of want of tact, I think the most gross, and at the same time the most amusing, instance of this is what I heard a very pretty American lady say to King Edward (when Prince of Wales) at Mme. de Sagan's, in the Rue St. Dominique, one day at breakfast. "Is it true what I've heard, that during your visit to Canada the young Canadian ladies bottled your bath-water?" The Prince's face was a study in amazement; but before he could say anything little monkey-faced Melissano broke in: "Quite true, but it was the ladies of New York. I have a bottle myself and always use it as a gargle whenever I want to keep myself from saying a *bêtise!*"

To return to the subject of trafficking in honours,

as I may be treading on tender feet in referring to the way it goes on in this virtuous land of ours, it may perhaps be better for me to refrain from putting on paper any of my particular memories in this connection and to confine myself to narrating what I remember of it in Paris, where, of course, they do all kinds of wicked things we could never be guilty of in England. Many of my readers will remember the great hullabaloo in France some years back about the sale of decorations—a farcical tempest which ended in the shipwreck of fat, clever, amusing Comte d'Andlau and of Edouard Portalis, the young brother of Harold, and grandson of the great author of the Code Napoléon. Nothing could be more absurd and hypocritical than the simulated surprise and indignation when this really well-known and time-honoured custom of trafficking was proclaimed as a discovery and a scandal in the columns of the newspapers. At the Restoration under Louis XVIII, the Legion of Honour was sold right and left and very cheap. "It's an indemnity for what they've suffered during the Revolution," explained the King as he pocketed the cash. We are told by Vaulabelle that the Abbé de Pradt, who was Grand Chancellor of the Order, made no secret of the fact that the decoration was for sale. And titles were also sold in those days as never before or since. You have only to open the *Moniteur* of 1814 to see that during the months of August, September, October, November, and December more letters patent of nobility were issued,

more titles of Marquis, Count, Viscount, and Baron granted, than during the whole two hundred preceding years of monarchy; and in the same period of time more Legions of Honour were given than Napoleon gave during his entire reign. The Duc de Berry gave 350 in one day! Talleyrand, who at that time was absent, being Ambassador in Vienna, wrote to the Comte de Jaucourt, who was his *locum tenens* at the Affaires Étrangères: "You must let things take their course for the time being, and wait till a calm comes. It is for nations, as for individuals, sometimes necessary to shut their eyes." When Talleyrand spoke of shutting the eyes he meant that also to entail the opening of hands: indeed as a rule the sequence is invariably almost automatic.

The traffic in honours therefore being so common and well known a fact in France in the early days of last century, why such surprise and indignation about it in the same country towards the close of the same century? The reply must be found in the words of the ex-Bishop of Autun just quoted: Nations like individuals must sometimes shut their eyes; true: but —again like individuals—when they open them they must for the sake of their good name boldly and loudly repudiate and denounce the sins that slumber, and vindicate their morality in Tartuffian trumpet blasts of indignation before resigning themselves once more to the convenient magic of Morpheus.

The master culprit, the chief offender in this carnival of crime (for Edouard Portalis had little or no

power) was one of the best known and most popular men in Paris—Comte d'Andlau. He had had a somewhat piebald past, for in the very early days of the Second Empire he had been caught cheating at cards while staying with the Court at Compiègne. The Emperor—himself the most honest of men—was horrified, but naturally averse to a scandal; and, taking advantage of this kind Imperial clemency, my kinsman the Prince de la Moskowa (at that time Grand Veneur) and Baron James de Rothschild taking pity on the youth (for he was merely a boy and had not long left St. Cyr), had the matter hushed up and the lad sent off to Mexico, where he remained for many years. When I first met him at the sumptuous palace of the famous *demi-mondaine* Valtesse, near the Place Malesherbes, he was an elderly man—short, fat, and very amusing; and his juvenile sin did not seem to have done him much social damage, for he was a member of the Jockey Club. How he ever achieved the skill he certainly possessed in juggling with the Legion of Honour I never knew; but he was never known to fail, and never kept the ambitious one waiting—provided, of course, the amount given was satisfactory. Old Arthur Meyer, whom I more than suspect of having many dealings with d'Andlau, once said laughingly to me: "Give him the money at Brébants and he'll give you the Cross a few minutes later at the Café de la Paix." I often met him, never in any salon—but on the racecourse, at theatres, the opera, clubs, and restaurants—and he was always

exceedingly amusing, had indeed, to use a vulgarism, more real wit in his fat little finger than all the professional wits of the Boulevard (in truth, a sorry lot) put together. But although constantly meeting him as I was, I never had occasion to seek his assistance as a Legion of Honour broker but twice.

Molière says there are two kinds of doctors—Docteur Tant Mieux and Docteur Tant Pis, or in other words, Dr. Optimist and Dr. Pessimist, and at one time in Paris this was exemplified in the most extraordinary way by two of the most luminous planets in the firmament of the world of healing—Dr. Cuzco and Dr. Richet. To exaggerate only slightly, if you went to Cuzco with, say, hydrophobia barking from every pore of your skin, he would be likely to say with an encouraging smile: "Oh, it's nothing: you're run down and want a rest and some tonic. Avoid for the moment ladies, cards, and late hours." Whereas if you went to Richet with, say, a mere cold in your head he would freeze you with terror, hammer you to the cross with nails of cruel questions, barbed with hideous significance; and then gravely, even mournfully tell you: "This is no ordinary coryza; I think there's something cancerous lurking somewhere." Now on one occasion the Duke of Edinburgh, who was somewhat of a hypochondriac, had asked me who was a good man to go to in Paris, adding in a very complimentary way, "You know Paris backwards and can tell me the right man. I'd sooner trust you than Tom Pratt."

So I recommended Cuzco, who lived in the Rue Glück. Many months later I was standing one night at the door of the Jockey Club talking to d'Andlau when I saw the Duke with Eliot Yorke on the other side of the Rue Scribe walking towards the Boulevard. The Prince saw me, stopped, and beckoned to me; so hastily bidding the Count good-night, I crossed over to him. "I sent for you this morning, but they said you were away."

"So I was—at Champlâtreux—I only got back this evening."

"I've just been to see that man Cuzco you recommended," explained the Prince, and then added, "Wasn't that Comte d'Andlau you were talking to over there?"

"Yes, Sir, it was."

"Isn't he the Legion of Honour man?"

Here my diplomatic training came to my assistance, and I put up my shutter. "I don't understand."

The Duke laughed. "Come and see me to-morrow and come early, say nine. I shall be alone then. Now don't fail. Good-night," and off he strode.

The following morning at nine I was at the Bristol and found the Prince alone. He was drinking a favourite mixture of his own invention—St. Marceaux and Curaçoa—and after giving me some, he came at once to business. "I want you to make that friend of yours, d'Andlau, do something for me."

"It's done already."

"I want the Legion of Honour!"

St. Marceaux, Curaçoa and surprise tripped me into absurdity—"For yourself?" I asked, before I knew what I was saying. The Prince laughed: "Don't be a d——d ass. A man I know wants it." Then he told me the whole story. A certain very rich manufacturer in the north of England wanted this French decoration for special reasons of his own. The Duke was very frank about the whole thing; told me it was he who had got the man his recent baronetcy: "and now he wants the Legion of Honour. God only knows why, but he does." His Royal Highness, of course, did not waste time in explaining to me what he knew I knew already, namely, that although it would, naturally, at once have been granted to his protégé, had he openly asked for it, such a request would have given rise to suspicion and talk. Hence recourse to the resourceful and never-failing d'Andlau. I told the Duke he had better meet the Count in some desert place apart to avoid any kind of chatter; suggested he should honour me with his company at dinner with the Count at Magny's in the far away Rue Contrescarpe, and said I would leave them alone when the coffee came in. The Duke accepted my invitation, and so everything was arranged. The Count was delighted to meet the Prince (I never breathed a word to him about the reason for the meeting) and made himself very amusing during the short repast, at the close of which I rose: "Monseigneur, je m'esbigne," and

departed. I need hardly say the coveted honour was obtained, and that all was for the best in the best of all worlds. Not long afterwards—on the occasion of his next visit to Paris—the Duke gave me his photograph, which I interpreted as my reward for the small rôle I had filled in this little comedy.

CHAPTER VIII

I HAVE told the reader about Bob Bristowe in *Things I Shouldn't Tell,* and I must now chronicle a comic incident very characteristic of the man. One morning, after I had just arrived from Paris, he called for me at Long's Hotel and said: "They've started a small Club near here—" (in Savile Row, I think) "which I'm told is all right—just the sort of little place I'm looking for, where you can have chaps to lunch and dine whom you don't much care to have elsewhere. Let's go and have a look at it." So off we went. Everything seemed to be all right as Bob said. The place was small, but cosy and well furnished, and the Secretary who received us (he knew Bristowe by sight, as indeed most people in London did, for he was a very popular man) seemed rather anxious to capture Bob as a member. While my friend and the Secretary were discussing the cuisine (Bob fancied he knew what good food was, but he didn't) I asked to see a list of the members. Looking over it, and seeing a great many names I knew, I noticed one peculiarity common to them all. "You've got a lot of first rate members here," I remarked, "but all the ones I know are Catholics." "Of course," replied the Secretary, "this is purely a Club for Catholics, exclusively so." "So that won't

do for you, Bob, my boy," I said laughingly to Bristowe. "Why? What do you mean? I don't understand?" he replied.

"Why this is exclusively a Club for Catholics, and you're not a Catholic, are you?"

Bristowe smiled. "Oh, that makes no earthly difference. This gentleman tells me they have some of that splendid old brown sherry they used to sell at Basil Woodds'. I think I'll join!" That witty, ex-soldier Pope Pius IX used to say of Pusey: "He's like a church bell: always calling people to Mass but never going himself!" In this instance, the call came from brown sherry and was effective, for I believe Bob joined the Club. I think it was the Stafford, but am not sure.

The predecessor of Pius IX was a notorious lover of the best vintages. My father happened to be in Rome when he died, and Torlonia, the banker, told him a funny story then going the rounds of the Roman clubs. When his Holiness arrived at the Gates of Paradise, he was still inspired by his admiration for the best that had been longest in bottle, and fumbled in vain with the lock to get in. At last, exasperated, he called out for St. Peter. Cephas appeared and said, "What is it? Who are you?"

"I'm the Pope. I want to get in and can't. Lend me your key, or open the door."

"Nonsense," exclaimed Peter. "You can't be the Pope. He has a key of his own."

"So have I: but I can't get it in the lock," replied the Pope.

"Pass it through the bars and let me see it!" said Peter. The Pontiff did as he was told; Peter looked at the key passed to him, and then burst out laughing. "Why," he cried, "You've made a mistake! That's the key of your wine cellar!" Disrespectful as this anecdote may sound in the ears of English Catholics, it is very mild in comparison with the tales told every night in the Eternal City at the tables of the hospitable and broad-minded Cardinals.

I have referred in *Uncensored Recollections* to the great care which the master thieves take in preparing a coup, and gave as an instance the good references which the French maid had who robbed Mrs. Paran Stevens. No doubt all crooks take the same trouble when they contemplate capturing a big prize, no matter what the special line of fraud and villainy may be. I was delightfully taken in by such tricksters once—I say delightfully, because I acted like an ass and deserved the treatment meted out to me and the loss sustained. Prince Gagarine, at one time the protector of Aimée Desclée, the great actress who had introduced him to me, brought to my apartment in the Champs Elysées one day a big, square man, with a ferocious white moustache, whom he introduced as a Major Rassis, a rich man, a Russian, an old friend of his, and of course a gentleman of good family. This latter recommendation was the mistake

Gagarine made, and a lucky mistake for me. I saw at once that no matter what else this man might be, he very certainly was not a gentleman; and so when Gagarine asked me as a special favour to have him admitted to one of my two clubs as an honorary member, I gave a diplomatic reply which inspired hope and committed me to nothing. How lucky that was for me, and how awful it would have been had I really complied with Gagarine's request, which I certainly should have done had his friend been even outwardly more of an "ad unguem factus homo," will be seen later. Some months passed; the white moustachioed Major called on me occasionally but I never introduced him to anybody; and he, doubtless seeing how the land lay, made no reference to admission to any club. One day he came and said, "A friend of mine, a Turkish gentleman, brother of the Sultan's favourite wife, the Sultana Saniha, is coming to Paris. He knows no one here; neither do I. Can you introduce him to anyone? He does not seek to go into the *grand monde;* in fact he only wants to know amusing men and, above all, gamblers. He is enormously rich and a tremendous gambler, would gamble all day and all night if he had the chance. Of course, you can easily find out all about him. You know Sir Edward Malet very well; he will tell you all about him; and so will your friend, Rustem Pasha; or quicker still, ask Essad Pasha at the Ottoman Embassy here in the Rue Laffitte." This was the most artful part of the whole scheme. I was so

boldly and frankly asked to make inquiries from intimate personal friends (except Essad Pasha) that I, a mere baby not thirty yet, fell into the trap and made no inquiries at all—until too late! The idea no doubt was that I should introduce this Turk to personal friends of mine, men of good social position; and it is just possible that if Rassis had been a better type of man I might have done so; but I hardly think I should, all the same. As it was I promised to do what I could. Now it so happened that I had recently been introduced by Paul de Cassagnac, the great Bonapartist journalist, to an American named Deutsch, who was an honest but vulgar man, and so mad a gambler that he was known on the Riviera and in all the tripots of Europe as "le Roi de Baccarat." He was a reckless plunger, but a man quite untainted by any suspicion of foul play. I found him as usual gambling at the Cercle Washington, then in the Place de l'Opéra, and naturally took good care to say to him: "Remember that I know nothing at all about this Turk. He may be a card-sharper for all I know!" To which Deutsch replied with a smile: "He'll have to be darned sharp to sharp me!" The Turk arrived with a suite (one youth who accompanied his Excellency was an interpreter, for the great man himself spoke only Turkish). He hired all the first floor over Durand's restaurant at the corner of the Rue Royale and the Boulevard de la Madeleine, and then the comedy began. I introduced Deutsch to Rassis, who introduced him to the

Turk (whose supposed name for the moment I cannot recall), and his Excellency gave a dinner to the King of Baccarat and his *chère amie,* a little actress at the Variétés called Rose Mignon. After dinner a little harmless gaming was indulged and resulted in Deutsch winning a few thousand francs. That was the preliminary canter. I, of course, was not there on that occasion, and had no intention of going near the man. But here an interesting thing happened. Count de Béarn, a scion of one of the noble houses of France, and a member of the Jockey Club, called on me and said: "I hear you know a Turk who's a great gambler and who lives over Durand's; do introduce me." I told the Count just the circumstances of the case, and at his request sent him on to Rassis with a letter of introduction. I had no hesitation in doing this, for I knew de Béarn could take care of himself, and indeed felt sure that if there was anything *louche,* he would find it out at once. Another week passed. De Béarn came to see me; told me everything was all right; he was dining almost every night with the Turk and winning his money as was Deutsch, and that his excellency paid on the nail. This report had the effect it was intended to have. I had a month before, as most men in the sporting world knew, won a little over £15,000—one could bet high in those days without altering the market—and so I decided I too would dine with the Turk and see if I couldn't add to my pile as the others were doing. So I called on him. He received me

most graciously, and I explained to the interpreter, who passed it on to his master, that I had been busy or would have given myself the pleasure of seeing more of him; but that now, as I had more time at my disposal, I hoped to enjoy more of his society. I was at once invited to dine the following evening. What happened may be guessed. I luckily brought only £5,000 out of my £15,000 with me: Rassis, de Béarn, Deutsch and Rose Mignon were there. I lost my money almost at once: and then in great disgust I went to a sofa, lay down and went to sleep. Suddenly I felt a timid hand on my shoulder. It was the young actress, who, by the way, had not been playing, but only looking on. "Wake up!" she said in a low tone, but smiling as she spoke as if she were saying nothing out of the way, "there's cheating!" I was naturally awake at once, but after murmuring: "Vraiment! Voyons cela!" I pretended to rouse myself very slowly—stretching myself, yawning and asking ordinary questions about her theatre, just slipping in the word "Who?" to which she replied in the midst of some make-believe gossip—"The Major!" At last I gave a final yawn and got up. "How are you gentlemen getting on?" I asked carelessly as I came up to the table. Rut Rassis, seated between de Béarn and the Turk, had seen everything, never taken his eyes off Rose Mignon, and as I sauntered up to him, he looked at me defiantly straight in the eyes, boldly took some cards from their hiding place between his legs, threw them on the table and

rose, saying: "I shan't play any more! I'm tired!" The fraud was as plain as the proverbial pikestaff—no need to count the cards. I touched Deutsch on the shoulder and said: "Come into the bedroom." When he followed me into the next room, Rose and I told him what had happened. What was to be done? Nobody wanted a scandal. There was no hanging proof against the Turk; it would be idle to have to threaten him through an interpreter. Rassis was the man. We must pounce on him without delay, no matter who else might be guilty. When we had thus decided, we returned to the sitting-room, but found that Rassis and de Béarn had gone; only the Turk and his interpreter were there! So we departed too, deciding to be up and active early. We were up before six, but both the Turk and his suite had departed from over Durand's, and Rassis had gone from his apartment in the Rue Mont Thabor. I went to the Embassy, but more to weep and be comforted than for any real help, because I knew that the Law of France does not interfere in such matters. But as this case was so very flagrant, Sheffield gave me a letter to one of the leading members of the Parquet, telling him who I was and asking him as a personal favour to help me if it was in his power to do so. I didn't take it at once; but went to the Ottoman Embassy. Essad Pasha very kindly received me himself, and when I told my story and asked about the Turk he gravely and politely said, "I'm sorry you didn't come before. That man is not a Turk but

an Armenian. He is no relation to the Sultana Saniha, but was an under-cook in her kitchen. He is a well-known thief and trickster; been in prison many times; and speaks French as well as you and I do." So all the nonsense of speaking to an interpreter who would translate and then convey the reply was merely a clever trick to give the rogue time to think over what to answer. The next day I went to the Préfecture de Police with Sheffield's letter. The member of the Parquet whom I saw was vastly amused; in fact he laughed like a child. "C'est épatant, c'est incroyable!" he cried. "Nobody would believe it. I can't tell you how sorry I am I can't help you, but I can't. It is not in my power. I shall write to Mr. Sheffield and explain." "Oh, you needn't do that," I replied. "We only thought you might give me some kind of hint. Could you tell me, for instance, if this man Rassis is still in Paris?" The official looked at me for a moment, hesitated, and then without saying more than "Wait—I'll see," left the room. He was not gone long, and when he came back said: "Well, yes, he is in Paris; I oughtn't to tell you, but I do." "You couldn't give me his address?" He shook his head. "No, quite impossible; I've done more now, far more, than I'm entitled to do." So with sincere thanks to him for his kindness I took my leave. It was a great thing to know the rascal had not fled to some outlandish place like Turkey. But how was I to find him? This question never left my mind. That night I was dining with Mme. de Brois-

sia and the beautiful Duchesse de Fezensac—the "Annie Laurie" duchess, as the Prince of Wales very aptly and cleverly nicknamed her—sitting next me said something, I don't remember what, about the Crédit Lyonnais. Then I suddenly remembered that Rassis had once said to me he always banked there when he had any money. The following morning early I was at the big building on the Boulevard des Italiens and, going to the section devoted to small current accounts, I said very innocently, "I've only just arrived in Paris and want to see my uncle, Major Rassis. He told me he banked with you and that if I asked here you'd give me his address; for when he left me he didn't know where he might be staying." "Oh, certainly," said the man; then, after consulting a ledger, "No. 11, Rue de l'Arcade." Here was a triumph equal, I felt at the moment, to the greatest feat of Vidocq or Canler! In less than a quarter of an hour I was at No. 11 in the street where at No. 1 in the apartment of Lord Charles Hamilton ("Carlo") I had so often enjoyed myself. No. 11 is a wretched little house. "Yes, the Major was in," said the concierge. "What name?"

"No name; say a friend."

Presently she came back. Would Monsieur walk up? Not I! Alone in the room with a Levantine ruffian! "Please ask M. le Major to step down and see me here: it is important and I'm in a hurry." Then the scoundrel appeared, and when, halfway down the staircase he saw me, he fell back in surprise,

not fear, of course, and supported himself with his hands against the wall.

"Don't be afraid," I said in English. "You're a damned thief, but I can't hurt you, I'm sorry to say. But I want to talk to you."

"Come up," he said.

"No, come down."

So after going back for his hat and overcoat, down the villain came, I took him to a café and gave him a drink. He swore he had only had a very small sum out of the money I'd been robbed of; and that the Turk had bolted with the rest—of course a lie, but I was powerless. Then he told me what really interested me, namely, that Count de Béarn was in the swindle. On thinking things over I had half suspected this, but, of course, I had found it hard to believe that a man of his name and position would be guilty of such a vile offence. But certain facts Rassis told me proved he was not lying, and that this man whom I had introduced to the late Duke of Beaufort and others, who knew everyone in Paris worth knowing, who belonged to the old nobility of France, and who was a member of the second most exclusive club in Paris, was a common thief. I decided to have a talk with de Béarn on the subject. I knew I couldn't hope to recover any of my stolen cash, but I wanted him to understand I knew all about him and hoped (and my hope was realised) that he might give me some information of a general character which might be useful. So the following morning early I called

on him and sent in my name. He was still in bed, but after a few minutes his man told me M. le Comte would be glad to see me. When I entered his bedroom the sight that met my eyes was really comic. There the Count lay in bed—a big double bed—and on the pillow by the side of the one his head was resting on was placed the most enormous pistol I have ever seen—the kind of "Stand and deliver" thing used by Claude Duval and Jack Sheppard. "Do you come as friend or enemy?" asked the Count, his hand lying close by the enormous weapon. I didn't answer, but burst out laughing and, pointing to the gigantic pistol said, "What's all this nonsense? Where did you get that ridiculous thing? Please remember we're not at the Porte St. Martin or Ambigu." The Count, seeing the way I took things, laughed; and so in a few minutes I found myself sitting on his bed chatting amicably. Regarding the money, of course, he had the same yarn as Rassis—the Turk had bolted with it all. But that I naturally expected to hear, and so was not disappointed. And then we had an interesting conversation. I reminded him that I might think it my duty to have him expelled from the Jockey Club; and he reminded me that I could not possibly do so because I had no proof of misconduct on his part. Then after a few minute's talk a most extraordinary thing happened. He had been telling me (what indeed I knew already) that not a few of the most prominent people in the higher circles of European society were by no means

above cheating at cards, and he had been mentioning many names to me, when he suddenly stopped and said, "Now I'll surprise you. Please go to that drawer and bring me a box you'll find there." I did so; he opened the box; it was full of cards bearing the seals of two of the most exclusive clubs in Europe. He opened one and showed me they were *marked already!* If I were to mention the names of the clubs, my readers would not believe me; in fact the whole thing seems incredible, and had I not seen it with my own eyes I certainly should never have believed it. A man naturally thinks when he is playing with a freshly-unsealed pack of cards at his club that he at least is safe from anything except legerdemain. But here what I saw showed me that such was not the case. It was a good lesson to me, and after that I never gambled except at a public table, or, of course, on horses. This eye-opener was almost worth my £5,000, which after all was only part of a bet, and so I didn't feel the loss of it. I never knew if Prince Gagarine was in the swindle, but he probably was, for Rassis was certainly not the kind of man he could have been associated with in an ordinary way. The Major was killed in a railway accident a few years later; and de Béarn died only two years before the Great War. He was a great friend of Raymond Scillière—cela se comprend!

Regarding Deutsch, I remember a very amusing story he told me of how he made money once without a penny of capital. He found himself one day in

Broadway, New York, absolutely without the price of a dinner and with no prospect of getting a cent in any way. Suddenly he heard the newsboys calling out—"Divorce of Mr. and Mrs. Dion Boucicault!" A brilliant idea struck him. He knew that the great Arrah na Pogue Dion and Miss Agnes Robertson were two of the most popular theatrical stars of the time in the Empire City. He went to see Boucicault, told him he'd heard the news of the divorce, and asked him if he'd be willing to act with his wife again and at once if it could be managed. Boucicault laughed—"Why, of course, why not? But it's a mad idea! She'd never consent to act with me again!"

"But suppose she did?"

"Oh then in the event of that impossibility I'd only be too happy." Deutsch got him to write a letter to that effect, which he dictated and addressed to himself, and then called on Miss Agnes Robertson. She also laughed at the idea and said Dion would never consent to act with her. Deutsch showed the letter; got a similar one from her; and then went to the lessee of the Winter Garden, which at that time happened to be closed and showed him the letters: "I haven't got a cent to pay you: but you know what a big draw this is going to be. What I propose is this. You do the whole thing on credit; and pay yourself the sum we agree on from the first profits. I won't touch a cent until you're paid in full." The bargain was struck. Deutsch said that when the curtain rose the whole show hadn't cost him a dollar;

but he netted a very big sum out of it when the enterprising lessee had been satisfied. Deutsch was a mixture of German, Jew, and American, and such a combination generally makes a good money-spinner.

CHAPTER IX

THE last five and twenty years have brought about more social changes—I use the term in its narrowest sense—in the leading capitals of Europe than any similar period of time for many a long day. Of course the Great War is the immediate cause of some of these transformations (in the case of St. Petersburg, one may say annihilations), but it can hardly be taken as the sole cause of the changed aspect of the society of this country and of France. The only two social centres which seem to be much the same as usual are Madrid and Rome.

Here in England the change has been more than an evolution. It has been rather of the hop, skip, and jump style of progress, and one of the most striking features of the change in London is the disappearance of the great ducal palaces, Devonshire House, Montagu House, and Stafford House—this last, to my mind, the greatest loss of all from a purely social point of view.

Montagu House I knew but slightly: Devonshire House tolerably well; but Stafford House I knew very well indeed and from early childhood, for my mother was an intimate friend of two successive hostesses there, and I used to be brought to the house by my nurse to have tea with "Cromartie" before my

little legs were sheltered from the wind by trousers. I shall never forget how my heart fluttered when I was kissed once in a romp by the beautiful and lovable and charming Lady Constance, afterwards first Duchess of Westminster, she who said to a friend laughingly when the Shah had been solemnly assuring her that the fame of her beauty had reached even Teheran: "He takes me for Westminster Abbey!"

The mother of this beautiful, fascinating, and clever lady, whose luncheon parties at Cliveden were always delightful, was a great huntress of lions and opened the doors of Stafford House to all kinds of celebrities—Garibaldi in the forefront—so that during her reign her reception rooms might almost have been described in the famous words which Matthew Arnold applies to Oxford, "Home of lost causes and forsaken beliefs, and unpopular names and impossible loyalties."

Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe, author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin,* and sister of Henry Ward Beecher, was taken up by the Duchess, and I shall never forget one afternoon conversazione given at Stafford House in her honour.

We happened to be over from Paris for a week, and my mother took me with her to the Sutherlands', although I was little more than a baby. But I remember the whole scene as if it were yesterday: the beautiful Duchess and handsome Duke: the fuss they made of me although I was not a "lost cause" or "forsaken belief" or "impossible loyalty": the

yellow face of the American author, who wore ringlets, posed as being willing to make any sacrifice to bring about the emancipation of the negroes in her native land, and so thought it befitting her *rôle* as a kind of Joan of Arc to sit solemnly resting her brow on her hand and looking with sad earnestness, but in perfect muteness, into the face of each man or woman (or child, for I was unwillingly pushed forward) which the kind Duchess brought up to her, as to a queen, and introduced.

This Olympian immobility of pose was at length shattered in a rather comic fashion. A young Irish lady, Catherine Hayes, called the Swan of Erin, was playing the harp and singing some sentimental songs by Samuel Lover, who stood by her. At the close of one particularly pathetic lament most touchingly swanned and throbbed by Hayes and harp, when the tumult of applause had ceased, Uncle Tom's "Mummy" condescendingly remarked, as a King Charles dog she had been nursing slipped from her lap and waddled slowly towards the warbler, "Such heavenly music, dear Duchess, has entranced even Carlo. See!" We looked: Carlo reached the harp: sniffed and expressed his approval and then, through blushes and titters slowly waddled his fat way back to his disconcerted mistress, while I, it goes without saying, disgraced myself by yelling with delight not only at the mute eloquence of Carlo, but at the blank bewilderment of Mrs. Stowe. Pity for Paddy, and sorrow for Sambo, were for the moment overlooked

in the wild tumult of chatter that arose to furnish a pretext for laughter.

Speaking of Henry Ward Beecher reminds me of what old, fat Tom Appleton (Longfellow's brother-in-law, called the Sydney Smith of America) said of the famous pastor: "Mankind fell in Adam, and has been falling ever since, but never touched bottom till it got to Henry Ward Beecher."

So far as Paris is concerned, the changed aspect of things social there is no doubt in great measure due to the absence to-day of the different political parties which in my boyhood and early youth split up into coteries the *grand monde* of the French Capital. One after the other of the chiefs have passed away, and their partisans by degrees have become merged in the general throng.

When I was a boy, there were the Legitimists, the Orleanists, and the Bonapartists. Of course during the reign of Napoleon III the last-named were the most in the limelight, but the Legitimist salons in the Faubourg St. Germain were, during the lifetime of the Comte de Chambord, no doubt the most exclusive and, in many instances, the most delightful; and to most of these I had the entrée through my dear friend General de Charette.

Athanase de Charette, the great Pontifical Zouave and hero of Castelfidardo and Mentana, was the grandson of the Comte de Chambord's father, the murdered Duc de Berry, by Miss Amy Brown, who,

as Charette told me, thought her husband was an ordinary French nobleman until quite by accident one night she saw him in the Royal box at the Opéra and learnt he was heir to the Throne of France.

The Faubourg St. Germain is always (and rightly) spoken of as representing the quarter of Paris inhabited by the leading members of the Old Nobility; but strangely enough the Duc d'Uzès and the Duc de la Trémoïlle, the two chiefs—for the actual supremacy of each is a matter of debate—of the French titled aristocracy lived in the Champs Elysées quarters. The old Duchesse d'Uzès was a Mortemart—the family that gave to the Court of Louis Quatorze the beautiful Mme. de Montespan; but gold from the Champagne family of Cliquot was admitted later.

But if the family of Crussol d'Uzès represents the first ducal house of France, the Duc de la Trémoïlle beyond all question takes rank as the premier peer of France, and I always thought the beautiful house of this great aristocrat in the Avenue Gabriel was more really redolent of the atmosphere of the old *régime* than most of the palaces of the St. Germain quarter, many of which have been degraded by millionaires of mushroom growth.

The death of the Comte de Chambord made the few, very few, Orleanist salons become merged with those presided over by the great Legitimist families such as the La Rochefaucaulds, the Fitzjames', and the de Noailles. By degrees the moneybags of the

Rothschilds, the Says, the Heines, etc., and the aristocracy of yesterday created by Napoleon I, Louis XVIII, and Napoleon III came to remove the special cachet of the "noble Faubourg," which in my early days, in such salons as that of, say, de Mortemarts was a very distinctive feature, an old-world atmosphere which was peculiar and very delightful.

In relation to these old-time salons in the Faubourg St. Germain, I remember a rather amusing incident. It was one of the Sundays of the Duchesse de Maillé. De Contades and I were just leaving together when Mme. la Duchesse, who delighted in giving short lectures of advice in which she could air her erudition and knowledge of things in general, remarked that my friend looked flushed, and began a disquisition on the wisdom of being a vegetarian, a virtue, by the way, which, if it be a virtue, the Duchess herself did not possess, as I can aver from personal knowledge. "Give up meat," she urged. "Pythagoras preached that in Greece, and Socrates and Plato obeyed him. Plutarch inveighed against eating what he called the result of murder: nearly all the Fathers of the Church abstained from meat—Hilarion, Gregory of Nazianzus, Ambrose, Augustine, David of Wales: and here now to-day in Paris —Michelet, Lamartine, our great traveller, Elisée Reclus; in England, Herbert Spencer" (she turned to me for confirmation, and I nodded assent although I knew nothing about what Herbert Spencer ate);

"so do, *mon ami*, give up meat." De Contades promised. "Then," said the erudite Duchess greatly delighted, "come to me next Sunday and tell me how much better you feel." Again de Contades promised, and we took our leave. When we got into the street the Marquis made me get into his brougham. "Where are you taking me to?" I asked. "To Bignon's to supper," said the amiable perjurer.

Of course the Duchess cared no more whether de Contades ate meat or not than she did whether her old friend the Pope (Pio Nono, concerning whom she had many funny stories to tell) shaved himself or got shaved, but she liked to be slightly (and pleasantly) dictatorial; and, above all, air her general information. Not a few lady social leaders of the old days, both in Paris and in London, were rather fond of assuming that attitude of kind adviser, embroidering their advice with erudition; or, if not that, with more or less witty embellishments.

One of the Duchesse de Maillé's stories about Pio Nono comes to my mind as I write. The old Duchesse Pozzo di Borgo told the Holy Father that he had been given the power to work miracles because an old sock of his, which she had worn round her neck, had cured her of the rheumatism, to which she had before that been a martyr.

"Well," said the cynical old ex-soldier Pontiff, smiling, "I congratulate you, my daughter. You are luckier than I am, for I wear two, and my rheumatism seems to get worse rather than better."

The Eccentric Angerstein

A friend of mine named Angerstein (I forget his Christian name), was a somewhat eccentric person. The nucleus of the National Gallery was the collection of his grandfather, who was an underwriter at Lloyd's, and who lived on the site of the Reform Club in Pall Mall. He was reputed to be the natural son of the Empress Catherine II of Russia, and was counted as one of the handsomest men of his day. He died long before even my father's time, but G. P. R. James remembered him as a child. His collection was bought for the nation for £57,000—a very good investment. But to revert to the grandson of this Adonis, one day, being over from Paris for a week, someone yelled at me from a hansom in St. James's Street. It was Angerstein. He made me get in and drive with him to the Criterion. He had been lunching with the Prince of Wales, was smoking one of those very large cigars specially affected by his Royal Highness, and told me laughingly he had given one to the cabman. We drove to the Criterion bar (in those days on the ground floor and opening on to Piccadilly). Angerstein kept the hansom; invited me to have a drink, and then saying "Good-bye," went out by the back door in Jermyn Street. I naturally paid no attention, and after my ingurgitation went out by Piccadilly, noticing as I did so that my friend's hansom was still waiting for him. It struck me at the time that it was odd, but then after all I, of course, had no knowledge what instructions he might have given before he met me. But a few days later

the newspaper reports of certain proceedings before the Bow Street police magistrate explained the mystery. Angerstein was summoned to pay the cabman, whose evidence was that he had been engaged by my friend at 10 in the morning; driven him about to different places; shortly after 1 o'clock to Marlborough House, when his fare lunched with the Prince of Wales, and on coming out presented him with one of the Prince's big cigars; then to the Criterion, whence his fare had disappeared. All that, of course, could be of no kind of interest, but what came out in the course of the case was indeed interesting. It appears that Angerstein made it a habit to "bilk" cabmen: it was his hobby; and he would go out of his way to do it, although he had no desire to rob them, for he had plenty of money, was very generous, and always paid, when run to earth, in addition to giving a handsome *douceur* to the injured Jehu. It seemed that all the cabbies in London knew his funny ways: most of them avoided him; others sought his custom, but kept their eyes open. The man who had driven us to the Criterion was a novice, and didn't know him or his tricks. Not only had Angerstein to "brass up," but he had also to pay costs; and on top of it all he gave the man a fiver as a present. What an odd hobby!

I have written in *Uncensored Recollections* about the great French actress, Eugénie Doche, who created the part of the Dame aux Camélias, and of the stories told me about her by old Lady Ailesbury;

but it was my privilege to make her personal acquaintance when she was an old woman (introduced by Charles Yriarte) and, although she was then about seventy, it seemed to me I could still see in her time-seared face some traces of the charm that had fascinated the reckless Lord Pembroke and Prince Louis Napoleon, and others too numerous to blush for. She was as lively as a woman of half her age, and full of most amusing anecdotes. The account of how "La Dame" (as the famous play is generally called for short by French artists) came to be produced, told by the creator of the title *rôle,* is of interest, for most of my readers must have seen the play either in French or English, or at least have heard *La Traviata.* Fechter brought the play to Doche in London. It had been refused all over Paris.

"It is the 'Vie de Bohème' without its wit," said Hostein, the manager of the Gaieté.

"It's too much like Manon Lescaut," said Montigny, manager of the Gymnase.

Déjazet said the *rôle* of Marguerite Gautier was not in her line at all, and Fargueil said very insolently to young Dumas:

"Your drama takes place in a world I know nothing of," to which Dumas with equal insolence replied,

"What! Not at your age? Well, then you certainly never will!"

Doche saw the great possibilities of the play at once, and came to Paris without delay, and after

much trouble, got Bouffé, manager of the Old Vaudeville in the Place de la Bourse, to take it; but it was only to be played alternately with a farce, in which Déjazet appeared as a love-sick nigger boy! Not a very brilliant opening, but still better than nothing. Young Dumas (he was young then, for I am writing of February, 1852) nearly lost heart; and when his opinion was asked about some detail in the last act, exclaimed:

"Oh, it doesn't matter after all! You'll never get to the last act."

Still the rehearsals crept on, when suddenly a thunderbolt fell. The authorities in the name of public morality forbade its performance. This was the last straw, and Dumas in despair left for Brussels. But Doche (mindful of the old London days) approached her former admirer through Persigny, and Louis Napoleon said good-naturedly:

"Qu'on lui rende son rôle à cette enfant." (Give the child back her part.)

So the interdict was withdrawn (it is generally supposed that it was the Duc de Morny who had the ban removed), the rehearsals were resumed; young Dumas came back from Belgium, and on February 2nd the play was produced with overwhelming success. Fechter, in the passion of his acting, destroyed many hundred pounds' worth of Doche's lace—but what did that matter? The triumph was unprecedented and complete. Young Dumas promised Doche other plays, but could not keep his word:

Montigny insisted on Rose Chéri having the "Demi Monde" and "Diane de Lys": but Doche showed me a photograph of the author, under which he had written, "un peu ingrat, mais pas méchant." Doche had known in the course of her long life not a few celebrities, and as she was a clever woman and had a retentive memory, was very good company, though many of her reminiscences and anecdotes were hardly of a nature to please the moralist. Most of her very many and very amusing stories were of personal experience, but for a few she was indebted to that very curious man (and great friend of hers) Spoelberch de Lovenjoul fils. Among these last were some very terrible tales concerning Georges Sand. The gossipy Vicomte (S. de L.) had shown Doche some awful letters (he collected such things, as all literary men know) from Georges Sand to Chopin, and from the great genius to the author of "Consuelo," which equalled anything the Marquis de Sade ever could have conceived. That these letters existed and were authentic I know to be true, for I spoke to the late Lord Dudley about them, and he was so interested that he went to Brussels, where the wicked Vicomte showed them to him, but would not sell them. I do not know what has become of the letters now.

Sainte-Beuve had been another great friend of Eugénie Doche, and she confirmed what I had heard from others, namely, that notwithstanding his quite abnormal ugliness Sainte-Beuve was a great favour-

ite with the fair sex. It is notorious that his attentions to Victor Hugo's wife became at length of so tender a character that the great Victor had to forbid him the house; but Doche assured me that Sainte-Beuve told her that that had made no difference whatever, and that Mme. Hugo used to visit him constantly long after he had ceased calling at her house. I told this to Dumas fils one evening at Mme. de Nerville's, and he said he had heard the same from other people and then added: "La petite Eugénie ne ment que rarement."

One story about an incident at Sainte-Beuve's which "la petite Eugénie" told me was really comic. The great critic sought his favourites among the working classes; and any pretty little shop-girl who was not too prudish was sure to find favour in his eyes.

One evening a girl from a bootshop called on him, and he invited her to stay to dinner. Hardly had they sat down when Ernest Renan was announced. Now if Sainte-Beuve was the ugliest man in Paris, Renan ran him very close. I never saw Sainte-Beuve, but Renan's face and figure were abnormally unattractive. His face was narrow at the top and broadened out, giving it the appearance of a pyramid; all the features were out-of-the-way ugly; he never lost the look of an unfrocked priest; his stumpy figure was the reverse of graceful; he shambled rather than walked, and had the most horrible habit of scratching his head while he talked. But when he talked!

Ah then—the voice was veiled but tender, every word fitting to the harmony of the sentence and conveying opinions and ideas not only arresting in themselves, but pregnant with food for reflection.

He began talking to Sainte-Beuve, the shop-girl listening, and the more the author of the *Vie de Jésus* talked, the deeper grew her interest and admiration for the ugly, clumsy, sallow-faced *défroqué*. So when at last the Professor at the College de France left, the little boot-girl slipped a paper into his hand with her name and address on it and the words: "I should like to see you again; I will meet you anywhere you like if you'll let me know the day before."

How Renan—the most pure-minded of men and devoted of husbands—must have smiled when he read this; and yet I feel certain he was touched, flattered, and pleased, for in his heart of hearts this exceedingly charming and amiable man was more of a poet than anything else.

By the way Edouard Pailleron told me a little-known story about Renan which is very characteristic.

Some wild drunken companion of Verlaine wrote to the great Ernest to ask his permission to set his *Vie de Jésus* to music. Renan replied, "By all means, my young friend: the book is public property. But why set it to music? Do you think it needs it? I thought I had already done that myself!"

CHAPTER X

ONE of the most popular men in later Victorian society was Oliver Montagu, son of the seventh Earl of Sandwich, and younger brother of the Lord Hinchingbrooke whose sudden flight with a bleeding nose, while talking with my mother at the ball given in New York at the Academy of Music to the Prince of Wales in 1860, and all that that contretemps led to, has been duly chronicled in my *Uncensored Recollections*. There was a peculiar charm about Oliver Montagu which it is hard to describe. He was very good-looking and full of fun, but there were plenty of handsome young jesters in society, although I do not remember one who had the peculiar fascination that Oliver always exercised over men and women alike. Although full of the devil in the way of harmless fun, and bubbling over with the *joie de vivre* (I remember once when I was with him, and Montague Guest, and wicked Dick Steuart at the Covent Garden Opera House that his ridiculous conduct nearly led to our all being ejected), although, as I say, radiant with healthy merriment, there was always lurking beneath this sunshine a soft sadness which in its simple sincerity was almost touching—the kind of look sentimentalists would interpret as indicating an early death. This soft sad-

ness in his eyes was really the indication of his great tenderness of heart, a tenderness which found expression in practical, and not merely sentimental, sympathy with all and every kind of suffering. For example, in his regiment was a trooper whom he had known at home, and who had contracted in its most malignant form the dread disease which killed Francis I. of France and Malibran's second son, to mention only two out of millions. Oliver Montagu not only had Alfred Cooper attend the lad, but often went himself and sat by the poor young fellow's bedside to cheer him. His men simply adored him, and I shall never forget their hoisting him and running about with him in the cavalry barracks at Windsor. I was living there then, having hired Ronald Gower's house for six months.

Most of the women in London were in love with him, and I remember when speaking to a well-known peeress, famous for her warm appreciation of male charms, of the terrible accident by which clumsy, effeminate Henry Lennox shot Oliver in the eye, she said with a smile full of meaning: "Oh, it was awful! But even with one eye Oliver will always be the most charming man in London."

Now in connection with the love of the ladies for him, I have a rather curious story to tell, but I shall not mention the name of the lady, who was very beautiful, very clever, but very eccentric, and who was well known in society for her supposed knowledge of things mystical and occult—not table-turning, or

planchette-writing or anything of that kind, but downright magic of the Albertus Magnus school. Well, this lady decided to make Oliver Montagu her slave. She hardly knew him, and he had never paid the least attention to her. So she had recourse to occult influence, and proceeded to cast a spell over him. She was staying at Claridge's at the time—the old Claridge's, of course, and there in that most unromantic of spots she began to weave her necromantic spell. She bought three pigeons (she told me she bought them very weak and sickly on purpose, as she had, according to rules, to wring their necks herself with her own hands and it was a repellent job), cut them open, took out their hearts, dipped her fingers in the blood, wrote O.M. on her forehead, and then, holding the still warm hearts in both her hands, after some incantation which I forget, in the name of the chief of the three princes of the nether world, the Lord of Lust and Passion, ordered Oliver Montagu to love her. She told me all about this herself, and said that Willie Dawnay came in to see her unannounced and while she still had the blood on her hands—a fact which Dawnay confirmed when I asked him about it many years later. The sequel to this is certainly curious. I had it from the lady, but possibly her evidence might have been open to suspicion were it not confirmed by facts. According to her, the following morning in the Park, Oliver came up to her and said,

"Do you know, Mrs.——, it's a most curious

thing, but I dreamt about you last night and have come here this morning on purpose to tell you about it, although I ought to be at Windsor."

That a *liaison* ensued is a matter duly chronicled in the Cyprian Calendar of those days and a fact beyond dispute, as neither she nor Oliver made any secret of it—not an attachment of long duration, and one which the Prince of Wales used his influence to determine; but still it very certainly existed, and began in the very odd and sudden way I have narrated. It was during the progress of this intimacy (which surprised everybody, as the lady was not by any means in the same set as Oliver) that the fair sorceress told me how she had woven her spell. The intrigue was, as I say, not of long duration, and the lady eventually went to live in Italy, where she died about ten years after the untimely death of poor Oliver in Egypt.

Oliver's eldest brother (the late Lord Sandwich) "Hinch" was credited with having the gift of healing. Steuart Muirhead always scoffed at this, and told me he had once asked Hinchingbrooke to heal him of a pain in his arm, and that there was no result. When I told "Hinch" this he was greatly amused.

"Dick Steuart never spoke of a pain in his arm," explained Hinch. "He asked me to back his bill for £6,000 with Kayler and I refused. That's the only kind of healing he ever came to me for."

Speaking of backing bills, the late Lord Downshire when first he came of age was a godsend to the

impecunious in this respect. He not only backed the bills of friends, but the bills of men he had never even seen! Marcus Beresford told me this, and I am confident it must be true, although it seems almost incredible. It appears he often got letters something after this fashion:

"Dear Lord Downshire, I have not the pleasure of knowing you personally, but we have so many mutual friends that I feel as if I did. Would you mind putting your acceptance across the enclosed bill? Needless to say I shall take good care to meet it when due, and you will hear no more about it."

The guileless Marquis would put his name on the bill as requested and, of course, had usually to pay up when his unknown correspondent failed to do so.

Mention of the late Lord Downshire reminds me that one of his horses was the cause of the death of two Irish peers. It was a horse belonging to Lord Downshire that Lord Rossmore ("Rosey") was riding at the Windsor races when he met with his fatal accident. The horse was a dangerous beast, and Rossmore only consented to ride it at the earnest solicitation of his friend, who in the meantime was seized with a bad attack of typhoid fever. As the race began, Queen Victoria drove by and ordered her carriage to stop that she might see it. The horse fell close by the Royal carriage, crushing poor "Rosey," and tried to rise twice, but each time fell back on his rider, absolutely shattering the pelvis and thighs of Rossmore, whose language in his agony

was of a temperature to scald the Royal ears. The Second Life Guards were lying at Windsor at the time, and Rossmore was brought to Dick Townley's quarters, where he died the following day. The terrible news of this fatality was to have been kept from Lord Downshire, who was convalescent, but somehow it got to his ears, and the shock was so great (he naturally reproached himself for having persuaded his unwilling friend to ride the vicious beast) that it killed him. "Rosey" Rossmore was a good chap and very popular, and his death was deplored by all. He was always chaffing me about my adoration of Disraeli, and I can hear him saying in his rough good-humoured way:

"D—— it! I can't for the life of me understand what the h—— you can see to admire in that b—— old Jew!" Very naturally; but none of Dizzy's qualities was of a character that would appeal to poor Rosey.

By the way, knowing my great admiration for the author of *Coningsby,* tales and anecdotes connected with him were often brought to me by friends who knew how gladly I should hear them. Here is one that was told me by the late Duke of Sutherland whom I used to see a great deal of when he was Stafford and had a flat in Ryder Street, corner of Bury Street, just under the one occupied by that very pleasant man, Admiral Sir Beauchamp Seymour, afterwards Lord Alcester. Dining at the Guildhall

shortly after becoming Prime Minister, Dizzy was addressed thus by the facetious Lord Mayor:

"One may say in the words of Banquo in *Macbeth*—

'Thou hast it now: king, Cawdor, Glamis, all,
As the weird women promised.'"

"Very appropriate!" exclaimed Bernal Osborne, who never forgot or forgave the "gratitude" dagger-thrust spoken of in my *Uncensored Recollections,* "but why didn't he go on?"

"Go on—why?" asked Stafford.

Bernal grinned and replied: "Why, the next words are—

'And I fear
Thou play'dst most foully for it!'"

Hearing that one of the most notable of all Austrian families—the Hohenlohe-Schillingfursts—is about to dispossesss itself of much of its land makes one realise in what dire straits the Austrian aristocracy must find itself: but it also brings back very pleasant memories to the minds of those who, like myself, remember Vienna in the old days. One of this family, but I don't remember which one, for there are very many and they are not numbered as are the members of the princely house of Reuss, I saw a great deal of in Paris and in London, and I introduced him to Augustus Lumley, who, with the late Leopold Rothschild, made a great fuss of him.

The head of the family, old Prince Hohenlohe-Schillingfurst, presided over that most august function known as the Hoffalrig, or Court Ball. This was the supreme expression of "blue-bloodedness," as only those who could boast of sixteen quarterings could aspire to be invited. One single *mésalliance* excluded; and the Lady Jersey of George IV's day almost had a fit when she was told that her daughter, who had married the famous Prince Esterhazy, was likely to be excluded on the ground that her father was in trade—a partner in Child's Bank! When some thirty odd years ago a member of the Rothschild family and his wife were allowed to attend this select function, Princess Dietrichstein told my mother she thought the world must be coming to an end.

Speaking of the Hoffalrig, a peculiar and most delicious soup was always served at these balls, a cold *consommé,* or strong broth, in which the stock had been extracted from fifteen different kinds of meat, fowl, and game. The recipe for this broth had been used in the Imperial kitchens for more than three centuries. That most amiable of men, Baron Nathaniel de Rothschild—"my house-Jew," as Madame Pauline Metternich used playfully to call him—told me that the waste in the Imperial kitchens was simply incredible. Nothing was ever served twice at Court (except, of course, the plate, linen, and glass) and there were myriads of bottles of unopened and most expensive wines (not to speak of those uncorked

but only half empty) and meats and fruits and flowers of all kinds at the free disposal of the servants every day. In fact, incredible as it may seem, the Court servants of Francis Joseph, who was himself the most abstemious of men, held an open market below stairs in the Palace, where they sold, to anyone who would buy, anything left from the Imperial tables. This scandal at one time became so great that the Emperor's sister-in-law, the Archduchess Maria Theresa, wife of the Archduke Charles Louis, determined to set an example, sent for her head cook, and made a contract with him to supply her household with so many meals a day at so much a head. This special Hohenlohe-Schillingfurst, whose name I do not remember, told Paul Demidoff and myself a very funny incident illustrating the bad temper for which the Hohenzollern family is famous. It appears that at a reception in Berne—the incident had taken place not long before—Lord Schomberg Kerr in the great hustle and crowd quite by accident trod on the spur of Prince Frederick Charles, father of the late Duchess of Connaught. The Red Prince, as he was called, kicked back, quite regardless of the Englishman's profuse apology; so Lord Schomberg lost his temper and kicked back in his turn, and there would have been a terrible row if the urbane Duke Ratibor had not come forward and poured oil on the troubled waters.

I referred in *Uncensored Recollections* to Paul Demidoff as being a man of no family—of a commer-

cial origin; and this, of course, is true, although his face was that of the typical aristocrat. But "ce cher Popaul," as La Gioja used to call him, married his daughter to a Lazareff, and through this matrimonial alliance became connected with the Russian aristocracy—that is, with the family of Biron de Courlande, who was chief among the innumerable "pets" of the naughty Catherine II. The original Lazareff made his fortune by finding the famous and historic diamond in Persia, which he smuggled out of the country by hiding it in a wound in his thigh, and sold for a fabulous sum to the Semiramis of the North. Prince Paul once gave young Hohenlohe-Schillingfurst, Nick Esterhazy, young d'Arenberg, myself, and a lot of others a dinner in Paris, to taste a saddle of wild boar and prune sauce, and it was inexpressibly unpleasant, not to say disgusting.

I have also spoken in *Uncensored Recollections* of Colonel Teesdale, who was in the suite of the Prince of Wales on the occasion of the visit of his Royal Highness to America sixty odd years ago. This splendid type of an English gentleman and soldier never came to Paris without looking us up, and he always made a great fuss of me as a child, so of course I loved him. I told him so once when I sat on his lap, and when he asked me why, I replied: "Because you love me, and because you're so handsome," which frank and true declaration of affection so pleased him that, after the baby had been duly hugged and kissed, the gallant Colonel sent his admirer a most beautiful

box of toys from Giroux's. The Prince of Wales knew of this, and always laughingly alluded to Teesdale when speaking to me as "your old sweetheart." He was not only a remarkably handsome man, but the bravest of the brave and one of the first to win the Victoria Cross. Both my father and mother were very fond of him, and so, of course, was the Prince of Wales. He was A.D.C. to Colonel Williams at Kars, and that fine soldier wrote to Christopher Teesdale's father:

"Just one line to say that, if possible, I admire my A.D.C. more than ever. He lived through a storm of shell and bullets for seven hours yesterday without a scratch. . . . He was artilleryman when wanted, and twice sprang out of the redoubt, and led the infantry to the charge. . . . I am proud of him; what must you be?"

It was entirely owing to the Prince Consort that the early companions of the Prince of Wales were such perfect types of English gentlemen such as Christopher Teesdale, the late Lord Sandwich, and others. Prince Albert was not only a man of great mental capacity, but of the greatest refinement. Certain writers of recent years, who have tried to evolve an imaginary man from books and pamphlets and who cannot have had personal intercourse with anyone who really knew him, have depicted the Prince Consort as a narrow-minded, proud German princeling—the ridiculous kind of person to be met with in great profusion at most of the leading social centres

in the Fatherland before the Great War. Old Mr. Van der Weyer, whom my father knew well, was very intimate with Prince Albert, and if what he always said of him was true (and the amiable old diplomatist was very often caustic in his criticisms of the Royal Personages he knew), the Prince Consort must indeed have been the perfect type of all that a gentleman should be—an *ad unguem factus homo* in very truth—kind, gentle and unassuming.

And so with Queen Victoria: no woman has been more stupidly written about by the ignorant. Old Lady Ely (who would always wax garrulous when my father would mix her a stiff Scotch whisky toddy) knew her, of course, very intimately and corroborated what in fact everyone who had the honour of knowing her Majesty well always said—that she was the most lovable of women, tender-hearted, simple, and unaffected. Even when past middle age she would play with children and had a most delicate and touching sympathy with all mothers bereft of their little ones. Of course, she would never tolerate any liberties (and in this respect resembled her eldest son) unless she gave the keynote first of the tone to be assumed: and any error of taste she knew well how to resent and punish; but here again she more often than not cancelled the punishment and forgave. Here is an instance, which I remember well, for I was staying near Windsor at the time. An Eton boy, son of a Cabinet Minister, got intoxicated, entered the Castle, found his way into the Queen's private

apartments, crept under the sofa and fell asleep. When her Majesty came in she was on the point of sitting on the sofa when she heard the noise of snoring, and the culprit was discovered and dragged out. Her Majesty was very angry, for the strange noise coming from under the couch had frightened her. The poor father was naturally greatly distressed and went down in person to apologise to his Sovereign. At first her Majesty refused to receive him; then she relented, saw him, gave him at first a severe lecture on allowing his son to drink, but finally smiled and said as she dismissed him: "Well, after all, it was not so bad as Guy Fawkes."

CHAPTER XI

I REFERRED in *Uncensored Recollections* to a curious incident, told me by the late Lord Wantage, connected with the arrival of the Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh at Windsor after their wedding in Russia, which illustrates the extraordinarily retentive memory enjoyed by many members of reigning families; but a fact communicated to me by Eliot Yorke, the Duke of Edinburgh's equerry, connected with the return of that bridal pair to England goes to show a devotion to Royalty almost mediæval, and certainly not to be found nowadays.

Baron Brunnow was the Russian Ambassador at our Court in 1874, and just before the arrival of the Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh in England Mme. Brunnow died. But in order not to interrupt the festivities attending the Royal home-coming, the Ambassador kept his loss secret for the time being, and had the corpse of Mme. la Baronne preserved in ice for three days. I hardly believed this when Eliot Yorke first told me, but years later in the Russian capital I asked Fred Troubetzkoi if it was true, and he said: "Why, of course, it's true. How could Brunnow have done otherwise?"

No doubt the Duke of Edinburgh knew about it at the time, and must have been greatly interested, for

it was exactly the kind of situation likely to appeal to him. I remember how he was cynically amused when I told him about our friend Baron de G., once a millionaire but ruined by cards and kisses, being found one morning at dawn by the watchman of the cemetery asleep in the chapel adjoining his family vault in Père la Chaise, an empty bottle of wine and a half-devoured cold chicken by his side, and how he had smilingly explained:

"You see I had hardly any money left—not enough to get myself a decent bed for the night—so I preferred to spend the few francs I had on my stomach. And you must understand I'm at home here. Je suis absolument chez moi. This is our family vault. I paid my share in having it built, and I have my last resting-place reserved for me here if the horse I've backed for the Omnium next Sunday doesn't win!"

This "locataire de Père la Chaise," as he was laughingly called for many years after at the Rue Royale Club, spent not a few of his many million francs on the beautiful Virginia Oldoini, Comtesse de Castiglione, of whose want of intelligence I have told in *Uncensored Recollections*. And here, by the way, let me note an error of which one of the critics of that book was guilty in stating that the beautiful Countess had at least the good taste to pass her declining years in seclusion, so that no one should witness the fading of her charms. She lived for the last twelve years of her life in an *entresol* in the Rue de la Paix, nearly at the corner of the Place Vendôme, on the

left-hand side of the street as you go down from the Opéra House to the Rue Castiglione, nearly opposite the original shop of Roberts, the English chemists, and in the same house as Prosper Roussel. It is true that only intimate friends saw her, but there was no kind of seclusion; and, in fact, this elderly Messalina used to go out at nights and frequent the low dance houses in the quarters of the Invalides and Ecole Militaire and there flirt with the artless *pioupiou*. Her chief resort was a particularly low dance hall known as the Bal de Mars. Everyone there knew who she was; she made no secret of her identity; and so long as she behaved no worse than the other women who frequented the place, the police could not interfere, although her husband's family did all in their power to have her put under restraint. The little intelligence she ever had had become diseased, and she sank to be a victim of the awful nervous malady often alluded to by Dr. Charcot in his terrible *Lundis,* and of which the Salpetrière has always many an example among its patients.

I know these particulars about Mme. de Castiglione are correct, for I had them, not only from a member of her husband's family, but also from Henri Rochefort, who knew the erst lovely Virginia very well and used to call on her in the Rue de la Paix.

Speaking of Henri Rochefort, he was one of the most astonishingly well-informed men I have ever met, though perhaps not the equal of Plon Plon in general knowledge. But the awe with which Prince

Napoleon inspired me when I was a child I never quite succeeded in shaking off, although I saw a good deal of him on and off until his death, for he was very fond of my parents, constantly calling on us, and for very many years never let a *Jour de l'An* pass without sending, by Baron Brunet, a box of bonbons from Boissier's to my mother. But as a child he positively frightened me not only by his extraordinary resemblance to his great Uncle, but by his heavy pompous manner; and so, this feeling of restraint in his presence never wholly leaving me, I never could draw out in careless conversation the treasures of knowledge for which he was famous. When I was a child, he once gave me only his forefinger instead of his whole hand; and I don't think I ever quite forgave him for this. (I remember well how very unclean the nail on that carelessly offered finger was!) But the last time I ever saw him to speak to—in fact, I think the last time I ever saw him—he not only was not ponderous or condescending, but almost merry. It was on the boat on the Lake of Geneva. I was going from Geneva to the Hotel Beau Rivage at Ouchy; he to Prangins. He was absorbed in a newspaper when first I saw him, but I sat down next to him and murmured "Bonjour, Monseigneur." He seemed glad to see me; asked about my mother, and when I told him she was at Ouchy promised to come and see her (he never came). Then, as Roberts the portrait painter (a Frenchman, though with an English name) passed us, I told the Prince of a very

funny episode connected with him and old Mlle. de Tournon, that marvellous and most charming half-bedridden maiden lady who was as lively and full of fun as a girl of twenty, and who used to be carried, as I have previously stated, to the Opéra on a mattress by four stalwart footmen. The story (I dare not repeat it here) so amused Plon Plon that he laughed as I had never seen him laugh before.

But let us return to Henri Rochefort—rather a long leap from Plon Plon! Rochefort always seemed to know everything. Edmund Yates suggested that he sometimes invented what he did not know; but this I don't believe. I had seen Rochefort condemned at Versailles, and when he escaped from New Caledonia and came to London I was introduced to him at the Café Royal by a very ferocious-looking but really harmless young Spanish anarchist named Romero (who, when an uncle died in Madrid and left him his fortune, renounced his wicked views and became a law-abiding citizen) and as Rochefort and I had many friends in common in Paris, we became in the course of time quite intimate and often dined together. I introduced him to Swinburne, O'Shaughnessy and other gifted Bohemians, and also to Tom King, the prize-fighter, with whom he became very friendly. Rochefort's knowledge lay chiefly in the realm of art—things artistic of any and every kind—but he would astonish you with carelessly bringing in some little piece of special and interesting information on all kinds of subjects in the course of general

conversation. For example, I remember once when I told him of the catastrophe of poor d'Arros, who shot himself in Paris because he could not pay his gambling debts—by the way, four months before he actually committed suicide he came to my apartment in the Champs Elysées and threatened to do it there, but I laughed and chaffed him out of it, telling him he would ruin my carpet—and Rochefort said:

"And yet through his great-grandmother he must have had plenty of money."

I opened my eyes. Imagine Rochefort busying himself about genealogical trees—except, indeed, to hang aristocrats on.

"What do you mean?" I asked.

"Well, his great-grandmother on his mother's side was of the noble but now extinct family of Saint-Charmond. The famous old Jew banker, Samuel Bernard, who used to have Louis XIV licking his boots; who gave the Prince de Conti money to try for the throne of Poland, who let the Duc d'Orléans have six million francs to help him to the command of the Spanish Army, had only two daughters, both of whom married into the *haute noblesse*—one a La Cosse, and one a Saint-Charmond. Your friend's great-grandmother had a dowry that would represent in English money to-day about £500,000. You won't find that in St.-Simon, or President Hénault; but it's true."

Then again this extraordinary man told a most extraordinary story in my presence to a man who also

was in his way extraordinary—the late Pierpont Morgan. Mr. Morgan had his own official brand of cigars—it used to be amusing to see him carefully destroy, tear into many pieces, the paper band surrounding each cigar, lest it should fall into felonious hands and be made ill use of—and never used at one time to have a cigar out of his mouth, smoking even while being shaved. On one occasion, when we left Truefitt's together, he offered to give me a lift in his carriage, the front seat of which was littered with cigars.

"I wish you'd give me six of these," I said.

He naturally looked at me in surprise.

"I'll send you a box with pleasure. But I thought you didn't smoke."

"Oh, it's not for myself, but I've got a very amusing man dining with me to-night, and he's a great smoker. Six will be plenty."

Then, as Mr. Morgan gave me what I wanted, I continued:

"They're for Henri Rochefort!"

Morgan stared at me.

"Is Rochefort dining with you to-night? I want so much to meet him."

"Then do come," I exclaimed.

But he could not; he had another engagement, but as I told him where I was staying—the Berkeley, then the St. James' Hotel—he promised to come in after dinner, if he could manage it. I told Rochefort he might be coming, and he did come. We spent the

most agreeable evening together, my only other guests being old Lambert de Chamerolles and Reginald Bird. Rochefort and Mr. Morgan became fast friends, and I believe some years later, when the American banker began to collect valuable modern manuscripts, that Rochefort got him some French ones of great interest—the original of de Musset's *Rolla* among others, if I mistake not. But the most memorable incident of that evening was the very interesting account given by Rochefort of the fate of the Crown jewels of France which, according to the encyclopædic pamphleteer, must still lie buried somewhere in Pall Mall! As Rochefort told the story, it appears that Mme. du Barry had the *diamants de la Couronne* with her when she came to London, where her sojourn caused a great sensation, people standing on benches in the Park to see the mistress of the old King of France drive by with the wicked Duke of Queensberry—old Q. That Mme. du Barry had these priceless jewels with her—that is, most of them, the most valuable—is, Rochefort said, proved by the fact that she sent them to Rudge, the Court jeweller, to be cleaned. Then, as we all know, the villainous Creole, Zamorn, who owed all to Mme. du Barry, enticed her back to France, promising her that she would not be in any way molested, and she was seized and guillotined. Now, Rochefort said she left the *diamants de la Couronne* in London: would not trust them to old Q., who begged her to do so, but buried them herself in the

cellar of the house in Pall Mall where she was lodging, and since then they have never been seen or heard of. Rochefort said that the Duc de Berry knew all this, and was going to take steps to regain possession of these priceless gems when he was murdered. Many years later, I asked the great Pontifical Zouave, the hero of Mantegna and Castel Fidardo, General Athanase de Charette, who married an American lady, Miss Polk, himself the grandson, *de la main gauche,* of the Duc de Berry, if what Rochefort had said was true; he said he believed it was, and that he had always been led to understand that a great part of the famous regalia of France lies buried somewhere in London. So the question now is, Where in Pall Mall did she live, for there lie buried the *diamants de la Couronne?* I told this to Marcus Beresford, who said he felt sure they were under the Marlborough Club, and that he would get together a syndicate of impecunious members to begin burrowing without delay. Why not get a water-diviner, or a wizard of some kind to tell us where to dig in the neighbourhood of Marlborough House?

One of the old members of the Orleanist party whom I often met at the Duc d'Aumale's was M. Estancelin, who, indeed, only died in 1906, long past his ninetieth birthday. He it was who saved the splendid jewels of the Duchesse de Montpensier (sister of Queen Isabella II of Spain and wife of the youngest son of Louis Philippe) and was never tired of narrating the not very exciting incident. He

was a deputy when the Revolution of February broke out, and went with the young Duchess of Orleans to the Chamber on this memorable occasion when she vainly tried to get her child, the Comte de Paris, proclaimed King. "Too late," said Lamartine. When the Duchesse de Montpensier fled to the Château de Bacomesnil, she had nothing but the clothes she was wearing. She had no money and, worst of all, had left all her splendid jewels behind her. Estancelin, who was at that time in the Diplomatic Service, and who was helped secretly by Lamartine and Bastide, got the big box containing these jewels and the splendid laces belonging to the Princess stamped with the official seal of the French Foreign Office, provided himself with the necessary papers, and quietly went by coach to Brussels, nobody at the frontier daring to inquire as to the contents of the officially protected trunk. From Brussels he came with his precious secret treasure to England—to Claremont where the Duc de Nemours received the box, opened it before the young attaché, and poured out what Estancelin used to term "an ocean of diamonds, pearls, and rubies" that covered the entire surface of the big dining-room table. Estancelin had no idea of the splendour of the treasure of which he had been the custodian; and here comes in a touch which would have delighted Balzac had he but known of it. The young attaché had been losing heavily at cards, losing far more than he could pay, and was threatened with dishonour; and the Orleans

family (never famous, except in the case of the Duc d'Aumale, for its gratitude or generosity) merely thanked the despairing young gamester for having safely brought to them an immense treasure which being contraband he could easily have—at least some portion of it—claimed as recompense for the danger and trouble he had incurred through his devotion. A mere "thank you" from a Royal Family to a young gambler on the point of being expelled from his clubs for not paying his debts, when that youth comes with some of the Crown jewels is, to say the least of it, rather an interesting situation; for I mustn't forget to add that the Duc de Nemours knew of the gambling catastrophe at the time, and spoke very sympathetically to Estancelin on the subject as he poured the diamonds, pearls, and rubies on to the table! But Estancelin never complained. He used to tell the story, very artlessly at least once a week during sixty years or more, and it never struck him that his Royal friends might have helped him in some measure to pay his debts.

Speaking of Crown jewels, I am in a position to affirm with certainty that the famous blue diamond from the crown of Louis Philippe which the Duc d'Aumale was supposed to have given to Léonide Leblanc, and which was the cause of so much trouble later, was never given to her by Henri d'Orléans. Léonide told me this herself. She used to pretend that the Prince had given it to her, but it seemed to me, knowing him as I did, that this was quite impos-

sible. So one day I taxed Léonide with lying about it, and she not only admitted that the Prince had never given it to her, had never even heard of the gem, but that it had nothing whatever to do with Louis Philippe or any kind of crown! Yet at the death of Léonide, this stone was sold at auction with the Royal legend attached to it. It was set as a ring, and bought by a widow lady whose father, by the way, was supposed to be the natural child of one of Louis Philippe's sons, and whose mother was a tradeswoman in New York. Later on, they became by marriage connected with one of the best families of New York. This widow who bought the blue diamond married a young and impecunious youth who might have been her grandson. One fine morning the blue diamond disappeared. Nobody was staying in the house at the time except a well-known old Russian gentleman, at one time in the diplomatic service, who had formerly been a favourite of the widow. Search was made by the police, and the diamond found in the Russian gentleman's box of tooth-paste! Great, of course, was the scandal, and the Russian had to leave his club: but eventually the police decided that there was no case to go for trial, and people made up their minds that here was a repetition of the Biblical story of Joseph and Benjamin.

I have said that Léonide Leblanc told me herself that her blue diamond was not given to her by the Duc d'Aumale and had nothing whatsoever to do with Louis Philippe, although she always recounted

the Royal fable to Louis Tiffany (no relation of the jeweller) and others. But I will go still further than this and say I am almost certain that the blue diamond I saw disposed of at the sale of her jewels was not at all the diamond she used to have, but quite another stone. I know not a little about precious stones, and to my mind very certainly the blue diamond sold was not Léonide's. But it is a very old trick to put jewels in the sale of the property of a famous person which did not really belong to that person.

When Sarah Bernhardt was living in the Rue Fortuny she happened to be very hard up. It was about the time she was rehearsing Fédora, and she had been lending money to a wretched little man for whom, through Grévy's military secretary, Colonel Lichtenstein, she had obtained a consulship in Russia. (He never went there, but took the money Sarah had given him for his consulship and went to Monte Carlo, where he lost it.) Sarah told her friends of her temporary impecuniosity, and the artful Arthur Meyer said: "Sell your jewels, my dear." "But I have none," replied Sarah. And it was true, for she never cared for jewels, and so never had any.

"Never mind," smiled Arthur. "All the better, in fact. Leave it to me. There's no jeweller in Paris who won't be pleased to have some of his stock sold at auction as having belonged to you!"

So very soon Paris was much interested to know that a great sale of jewels, belonging to the famous

actress, was about to take place. As a matter of fact, not more than three of the articles sold ever belonged to Sarah; and the greater part of the things she had never even seen, much less worn. Many years later, I met at Deauville an American lady who told me the chatelaine she was wearing had belonged to Sarah and that her husband had bought it at this sale in the Rue Fortuny. I remembered the Rue d'Albe and held my peace. So don't believe because you buy a bone in Smyrna that it's a part of Polycarp's finger; or, because you purchase a diamond at the sale of the effects of an actress or a countess, that it must have been the property of the alleged owner.

CHAPTER XII

WRITING of Sarah reminds me to refute the ridiculous rumour that she, like all people of the Semitic race, was devoid of a sense of humour. In the first place, I very emphatically deny the truth of the sweeping assertion that Jews have no sense of humour. Quite the reverse has been my experience of the Chosen People, and my knowledge of them has been long and varied. Not to speak of the obvious case of Heine, I have known—and no doubt very many of my readers will corroborate what I say—a great number of Jews with a very keen sense of humour. The first Lord Rothschild was one; and so was Leopold (I don't think Alfred had much, and I am very certain Walter had none). But Jules Porges was possessed of a keen sense of humour; and so was—though of a rather bitter and sardonic character—old Hirsch. The late Mme. Alphonse de Rothschild, beautiful, and kind, and good, and clever, had a very keen sense indeed of humour; and so had old Nathan of Rome. I am inclined to believe the real fact is that they have earned as a people the reputation of lacking humour through having too much of it, and that the contemplation and enjoyment of the gigantic jest and farce of governing us poor self-dubbed Christians as they do, not with a

rod of iron, but of gold, gives the children of the Circumcision of Abraham neither time nor cash for appreciating the ordinary little smile-compelling pranks, tricks, and incidents of human life. You cannot, for example, reproach a Senior Wrangler for not taking an enthusiastic interest in, say, the Rule of Three, or the Pons Asinorum.

As for Sarah Bernhardt, she was full of fun, and had a very keen sense of humour of a quality by no means cynical, much less sardonic like that of Baron Hirsch. Here are two stories about Sarah, neither of which has ever been in print before, but both well known to her intimate friends. Henry James, who had no sense of humour whatever, once gravely asked her what were the three finest lyrics in the French language. This grotesque and ponderous query was emitted by the author of *The Turn of the Screw* in my presence in Sarah's dining-room in the Rue Fortuny, where we were all lunching. Sarah at first could not believe her ears.

"Comment?" she said. "Je ne comprends, pas."

Henry James repeated the inconceivably stupid question. Then Sarah stared at him; saw, and understood all. She was eating an enormous mutton chop at the time, but she glanced quickly at me, smiled, and then said gravely:

"The three greatest lyrics in the French language? Why, how can there be any doubt on the subject, Mr. James?

" 'Qui qu'a vu Coco,'
" 'Pitié pour ma binette,' and
" 'Trois curedents pour un sou,' of course." [1]

Then the account she gave of how she outwitted Mounet Sully in a passionate love scene in *Ruy Blas* was very funny. "La voix d'or" trick had just been invented by Sarah, and in the scene to which I am referring, Sarah made very effective use of this "golden voice" nonsense—holding Ruy Blas in her arms, her lips close to his, gazing into his eyes with passionate tenderness, while the golden voice musically decanted the wine of the great Victor's verses. Mounet Sully, who hated all cant and sham and was rather brutally honest, begged Sarah to give up the voice of gold and make use of the voice with which Nature had endowed her. This Sarah laughingly but resolutely refused to do.

"Very well," said Mounet Sully, "we shall see. I don't think, my petite Sarah, that at to-morrow's rehearsal, you'll find it so pleasant to be nose to nose with me as you coo your lines!"

Just before coming to the theatre on the following day he ate a lot of onions, with the result that his breath nearly overpowered Marie de Neubourg when her Majesty held the varlet in her loving arms. Sarah expostulated.

"I shall eat onions every day," said Ruy Blas, "until you abandon that silly voice."

"Will you, indeed?" said Sarah. "Well, we shall

[1] Three well-known music-hall and street songs in Paris.

see. I daresay I can checkmate your onions if I think the matter out."

And she did. The following day, Mounet Sully came reeking of the unpleasing odour again, but Sarah simply changed her *jeu de scène,* and instead of cooing at him nose to nose, as her tormentor coarsely put it, she held him far from her, at arms' length, as it were, to gaze in adoration at his face, as she cooed out her lines in a voice more deliberately golden than ever.

"And now, *mon ami,*" she said with a triumphant smile, when she saw the astonishment of her companion, "in this way you can eat all the onions in the market for anything I care!"

Mounet Sully saw he was beaten; so he capitulated, abandoned his onions, returned to the nose to nose situation, and submitted to the golden voice. But I do not think Sarah ever quite forgave Mounet for his mutiny, and I remember a comic remark of hers to him at a rehearsal of the last act of this same play. I was standing with Sarah's *cher ami* of the moment (Kapnist, Chancellor of the Russian Embassy) at the side of the stage at the Comédie Française, and Sarah said in affected anger to Ruy Blas:

"Now, see here, *mon cher* Mounet, you are far too long in taking that poison. I can't and won't have it. Please remember, *mon ami,* that the audience doesn't care a fig about you and your poison—all eyes and all interest are on me. When I turn away, you ought to take your poison at once like a good boy, instead of

keeping me waiting while you wriggle and stagger, and make a fool of yourself over the phial, keeping me waiting to turn and go on with my part. Now I warn you once for all: if you don't take your poison the moment I've turned my back, on the night of the *première,* I shall simply turn around, say 'Zut,' and leave the stage!" She meant what she said, and Mounet knew it; so he abandoned his lengthy phial-clutching, staggering, and uplifting of eye, and swallowed his drug without delay.

I must chronicle a rather odd thing in connection with Sarah Bernhardt. She was very anxious, for reasons best known to herself, to become better acquainted with the Duke of Edinburgh. She had met him only once, and then in circumstances that allowed of no intimate conversation. Knowing that I always saw a great deal of him whenever he came to Paris, she asked me if I could arrange to bring him to the Rue Fortuny. The Prince seemed pleased and flattered when I told him all the nice things Sarah had said about him, and on three different occasions made an appointment for me to call for him and bring him to her—twice to go to the Rue Fortuny with me, and once to go to her dressing-room at the Comédie Française—but nothing came of it. He was always engaged and put me off. So I told Sarah to write to him herself. I believe she did so, but am not sure. At all events I know he never went near her.

One of the Duke of Edinburgh's most cherished friends in Paris was a young musician named An-

drieux. The Duke himself was, as everyone knows, quite a good violinist and very fond of music, and Andrieux was always discovering and bringing to the notice of the Prince compositions for every sort of instrument, which he would pick up in all kinds of out of the way places. One very beautiful thing I remember he brought to the Prince, who played it to me with great delight. It had been written for the viol, was an invocation to the Virgin, and Andrieux had found it in manuscript in a convent in Roumania, the country of which the Prince's daughter was destined many years later to be Queen. It was a most pathetic composition, and the Prince, who was a very emotional man, would sometimes stop while playing it, take his fiddle from his shoulder, look at me with tear-dimmed eyes, and sigh heavily, which exhibition of deep feeling never failed to provoke a smile or laugh from me and a "What a d——d beast you are!" from his Royal Highness, who, however, notwithstanding these music-evoked tears, was by no means tender-hearted. His elder brother, as I have already said, was very distinctly a tender-hearted man, one to whom all suffering very strongly appealed, and who was ever ready with sympathy, advice, and money to do all in his power to help those in any kind of trouble who came under his notice. In fact, when he came to the Throne, this kindness of heart and abundance of sincere sympathy and desire to help were somewhat taken advantage of by both sexes; and a very well known and popular nobleman

said to me, only the year before his Majesty's death, "If I can't get out of this mess any other way, I shall have to go to the King, and I don't want to do that if I can possibly avoid it, although I know he'd help me like a shot; but everyone's after him all day long, and I don't want him to think I'm just like all the others."

I remember a very pretty story Andrieux told the Duke and myself. He said his mother was very anxious he should be given piano lessons by Chopin, whom she knew very well, and who at that time lived in the Rue St. Lazare. So one day she took her son, at that time a small child, to see the great man. Andrieux said he was then as thin as a skeleton, and with his deathly pale face looked more like a spectre than a man. Chopin listened to Mme. Andrieux's request and then replied, "Believe me, I feel greatly touched and honoured by what you ask, and nothing would give me greater pleasure than to teach this dear child music if I were staying in Paris. But I am not; for my health is so bad that the doctor is sending me away. When I come back, if I ever do come back, please visit me again; and, if I am well enough, I will gladly do what you wish." There was a glass on the table containing a beautiful rose. Chopin took the flower, knelt down in front of the child, took him in his arms, kissed him, gave him the rose and said:

"Take this, my dear little friend and future pupil, and keep it; and in after years, when you've grown

up, you may care to show it and say: 'Chopin gave me that!' "

The child thanked him and took the rose eagerly, but as he and his mother went down the stairs, after saying good-bye to the great man, it fell to pieces in the boy's hand: typical of the days of the giver, who never lived to keep his promise, for within a few months he had passed away.

That the best man is not always a victor in a duel, when pitted against a fool at the game, was exemplified in rather a remarkable way in a combat in which the late Lord Walsingham and I were interested. A young Pontifical Zouave named Alfaro, a connection by marriage of Lord Walsingham, had for some reason or other taken a great dislike to a Frenchman whom he did not know and had never spoken to, but whom he was always meeting at a certain café in the Eternal City. One day, Alfaro could stand it no longer so he threw the contents of his soup tureen into the man's face and the tureen after it. Cards were necessarily exchanged and a meeting was arranged for the following morning at dawn—sabres to be the weapons. When that afternoon the mad young Zouave told Lord Walsingham and myself about the impending combat, and admitted he knew nothing about handling a sabre, I suggested we should all drive out to see old General Morosini, at his villa just outside Rome, he being a man famous for his swordsmanship, and an old friend of my family and

myself. So out we went. Morosini found out at once that it was hopeless to try to teach young Alfaro how to use the sabre effectively in the few hours before the duel; and, while we were all deliberating, it suddenly occurred to me to ask the name of the man our young friend was going to meet. He threw the card on the table. He had not taken the trouble to look at it and we read the name—Le Vicomte de la Poëze. "Good God," I cried, "you're done for! This man is one of the most famous duellists of France, and only last season in Paris got into trouble and had to leave the Cercle de la Rue Royale because of his thirst for fighting. He is particularly clever with the sabre, and he's not likely to spare you and forgive the soup and the tureen on top of it. So make your will and see your confessor at once."

Morosini knew all about La Poëze—knew him personally, in fact—and endorsed what I had said; but suddenly he saw a gleam of hope. "Knowing nothing whatever about the sabre is far better than knowing a little about it when you find yourself face to face with a man like La Poëze, who knows all about it. Your very ignorance may save you: it is indeed your sole and only chance of saving your life. La Poëze naturally expects to meet a man who knows something, no matter how little, of the weapon he is using. He himself knows all about this special weapon, and counts on playing with you as a cat with a mouse. Give him no chance to do this. Ignore all the rules (which won't be difficult, as you don't know

any of them) about sabre practice, and rush at your man like a drunken peasant. La Poëze will be so astonished by such extraordinary and unexpected clownishness that you may catch him off his guard and be able to have a cut at him that will decide the fight." The advice was shrewd and obviously the only one to follow, and Alfaro followed it with success. In the early dawn we were all on the ground. I nodded to La Poëze whom I knew very slightly, and in a few minutes all was ready. La Poëze's second was young Castagnary, and Walsingham was Alfaro's. The young Zouave rushed, as Morosini suggested, at the French duellist like a drunken ploughboy, and before the amazed and bewildered La Poëze could recover his senses, he received a slashing cut on the upper part of the right arm that put him at once *hors de combat.* Lord Walsingham and I, and that most delightful of Jesuits and worldly and witty of spiritual guides, Father Brownlow, dined with Cardinal Howard that night, and we greatly interested our charming host with an account of our morning's adventure.

By the way, this man La Poëze was, if not the inventor, at least the narrator of most of the idiotic and scandalous stories current in the Paris clubs, and it was only his well-known skill with sword and pistol that saved him many a time from a sound thrashing. It was he who revived the old groundless scandal that the first Duc de Persigny—the good-natured, smiling fellow conspirator with Morny, Louis Napoleon,

Mocquard, and Fleury of the 2nd December—was the lover of his mother-in-law. This was a current fable and accepted as true by silly old Hübner: but, as I say, it was absolutely groundless. The revival of it by La Poëze gave great annoyance to the young Duc de Persigny, the son of the first Duke. Old Persigny (whom I knew very well as a child, for he was constantly at our house and indeed married a mad kinswoman of ours) was by no means a conspirator in appearance, but always open and frank and jolly and laughing—one of the most good-humoured and amiable men I have ever met. He was the last man in the world to bear malice, and certainly one of the most forgiving of mortals. I do not say this merely because he smilingly tolerated his wife's numerous lovers, but because he was famous for his kind and forgiving nature, and never said a bitter thing, although he himself was forever being insulted and maligned, not only by mere penny-a-liners of the Press, but also by persons of importance, as, for example, by Mgr. de Merode in a famous remark made on the occasion of Persigny's visit to Rome in 1860.

It is a fact but little known outside the diplomatic world that it was Persigny who first suggested that Prince George of Denmark should be offered the Throne of Greece. It had gone begging (it was offered to Edward, Lord Derby, uncle of the present peer) and had been refused by many. It must have been what the toothbrush moustachio'd, hair-brushed-back, youthful horror of the present day

would call "priceless" to see Lord Derby (then Stanley) refuse the succession of Agamemnon. His tongue was too big for his mouth, and he had a way when nervous (and he was a very nervous man) of opening his mouth, before speaking, that revealed the too lanky organ of speech going up and down inside before framing a word. And as the Hellenic Crown was declined by him in person and by word of mouth, on the occasion of the visit of the Greek Delegates to St. James's Square, the lingual gymnastics preceding the refusal must have been a thing of joy to witness. The facetious Gussie Gore maintained that what Lord Stanley really said, when his tongue had ceased waving, was "I thank you, gentlemen, very much: but I never take anything between meals!"—which, by the way, was not an original joke.

Now just at that time there happened to be residing in Paris in the Faubourg St. Honoré near Pereire, near Edmond de Rothschild, in fact close to our Embassy, a very popular American family named Reynolds, composed of a clever retired lawyer, his beautiful wife, and three very pretty daughters, and two sons, the younger at home with a tutor, and the elder in the American Navy; but, being in a European squadron, often at home. I knew them all very well as a boy, and so did old Persigny, who was often at their house and used to play blind-man's buff with the girls. On one occasion, the young American naval officer brought another young sailor home with him to have a few days' fun in Paris. This

young fellow was Prince George of Denmark. Persigny met him and liked him. Young Reynolds took his Royal chum about, and I have no doubt they enjoyed themselves immensely, for Prince George all his life long was very fond of the society of pretty women; and, although he was as poor as the proverbial church mouse, young Reynolds at any rate was always lavishly provided with pocket money and very generous with it. I have already referred to that remarkable woman Esther Guimon—"The Lion"—who knew everybody and everything worth knowing in Paris. The two young naval officers on pleasure bent found themselves not unfrequently in her pleasant salon, and she, like Persigny, took a fancy to the young Danish sailor. Esther was very fond of mixing herself up in diplomatic matters (hence her intimacy with Plon Plon and Emile de Girardin), and it was she and no other who suggested to Persigny that young Reynolds's naval chum should be offered the Crown of Greece, which was done; but I believe his father, Christian, would not allow him to accept it unless Russia, England, and France would guarantee the young Prince £25,000 a year in the event of his deposition, for Christian IX knew but too well how pitiful is the position of a Prince who has to count his pence as he had had to do during the long years he was waiting before his Uncle Frederick VII died.

The young Prince made himself popular from the very beginning with his Greek subjects, and a suc-

cessful *début* in Royal as in other matters is all important; for it is profoundly true, as the Duchesse de Polignac's clever cousin Hérault de Séchelles wrote, "It is important to begin well. Men always judge by the first glance, and their subsequent opinion is nothing but a repetition of their first impression."

I met King George of Greece frequently in Paris (where he often came *incognito*), but knew him only very slightly; and, in fact, I never had so long a talk with him as on the last occasion I saw him—at the little Théâtre des Capucines—at the door of which minute *bonbonnière* of pretty actresses he and I chatted together for a few minutes over a cigarette, and, during an entr'acte, on the beauty of the lady artists—feminine charm being a subject his Majesty was almost as good a judge of as his Royal brother-in-law the father of our present Gracious Sovereign.

The foregoing is the true account of how the brother of our late Queen Alexandra came to be offered the Throne of Greece. The prominent figures in the comedy were, as I have recorded, a young American naval officer, a Parisian Phryne, and the first Duc de Persigny, although no doubt Emile de Girardin, often behind the scenes in Royal episodes (it was he who advised Louis Philippe to abdicate), had some influence in the little *complot* of his *"chère* Esther," in whose house by the way Dumas *fils* wrote the whole of *La Dame aux Camélias*. But Esther Guimon (whom I only knew when she was old, old in years, but as lively as a woman of thirty) was

always a good fairy to young men and gave them excellent advice, not only on matters of mere pleasure, but even in such serious questions as marriage—although, alas! they did not always obey "Le Lion," and more often than not had reason to regret bitterly this waywardness. A notable instance, among many, of this was the case of young Prince Robert de Broglie, who, in spite of all old Esther said, married a music hall actress named Estelle Alexandre, and was reduced to such penury in New York that he was in want of daily food, and had at last to accept the post of conductor of the orchestra in a very low class music hall.

Although Esther Guimon lived to a great age, she was never hard up, for not only did Emile de Girardin take care of her, but old James de Rothschild had bought her a *rente viagère* when she was young, and she was no exception to the general rule that life pensioners cling to their perch with abnormal tenacity. Old James de Rothschild I remember very well. He was a good-natured and very generous man, but a profound cynic, and to hear him and the late Lord Dudley discuss human affairs, as I have very often in my mother's salon in Paris, was a liberal education in the art of despising our fellow beings. It used to be the habit of all the Rothschilds to walk to their place of business in the Rue Laffitte, and old James told my father laughingly once that, owing to beggars of all ranks in life putting themselves in his way, this morning promenade was a very costly exer-

cise. Baron Alphonse arranged that all such people should come to his house in the Rue St. Florentin, so his morning walk to business was comparatively unimpeded; but his antechamber in Talleyrand's old house, where his beautiful and charming English wife presided, was a sight to behold, and resembled the pool spoken of in Scripture where the suffering came to be healed—of course, I refer to their pockets. Old Baron James had no very high opinion of the class called by Gallifet "les traîneurs de plume," and it is narrated that having by way of kind encouragement bought some shares in the *Revue des Deux Mondes,* when first that famous periodical started, the Baron was astonished beyond measure whenever he received any return for his investment, especially in one year when the interest paid to him was very high. "I can't understand it," he exclaimed to Emile de Girardin, who used to tell the story; "how do they manage it? I thought it was only a literary enterprise!"

Towards the end of his life old Baron James became almost blind, but I think this inability to see distinctly was at times exaggerated by this artful son of Abraham. For example, he used to pretend he could not recognise anyone until he had put his hands on them. But he never pawed men or ugly women, and seemed to reserve this special mode of recognition for comely specimens of the fair sex. I shall never forget how I as a child, with my mother and Mme. de Gallifet (both beautiful women), were just

beginning to go upstairs in the Hôtel de la Terrasse, at Deauville, when the old Baron appeared on the arm of a smiling Jewish gentleman named Roth, who said to him, "Here, M. le Baron, are two very charming friends of yours." My mother, who knew the artful old man's trick, stepped back, but Mme. de Gallifet came forward and gladly underwent the pawing which preceded the—"Tiens, c'est cette chère Mme. de Gallifet si je ne me trompe pas!" My mother avoided the ordeal by touch by telling the Baron who she was.

CHAPTER XIII

I HAVE written in *Things I Shouldn't Tell* about the 15th Lord Winchester, whom I knew when he was at Eton. He was a particularly agreeable young fellow, who was elder brother of the present Marquis and who was killed at Magersfontein. Lord Winchester is premier Marquis of England, and, as everyone knows, is the bearer of the Cap of Maintenance on State occasions—a crimson velvet cap turned up with ermine held on the point of a bâton, the base of the bâton resting on the hip of the bearer; but what is not generally known is that he is the only official who in the Parliament House when the Sovereign attends to open or prorogue Parliament does not descend to the door to meet him or her. Lord Wiltshire, as he then was, took me to see his father, the 14th Marquis, a very tall old gentleman who lived in the Albany; and when one passed the threshold of his hospitable chambers, it was like stepping back into the days of the Regency and Carlton House, for not only Lord Winchester himself dressed as in the time of Sheridan and Lord Coleraine, but most of his friends were gentlemen of the old school. Among those friends were Mr. George Payne, the supreme arbiter and judge in all cases of honour, who was the perfect type of an English gentlemen (by the way he always

promised to leave me his watch, but I never got it; it came into the possession of Lord Dupplin in some mysterious way, and he in turn promised to leave it to me, but here again I was disappointed); old Frederick Ponsonby, Lord Bessborough's brother and inseparable companion; Mr. Robert Grimston, Lord Verulam's brother; Mr. Charles Greville; old Lord De La Warr, who was eventually found drowned in the Cam and who, after keeping his phaeton and splendid pair of horses waiting for him for an hour or two at the door of his chambers in Pall Mall, would at length appear dressed in the last fashion of 1825, leisurely put on a pair of bright lemon-coloured gloves, elaborately, and with great dignity, seat himself, take the reins, and then gravely drive to the house directly opposite, the Travellers' Club, where he would spend the greater part of the afternoon; old Lord Bathurst, who at his own table, when I had the honour to lunch with him, wore a black velvet Court suit and a funny little cocked hat kept on by hairpins; Admiral Rous, whom I often used to visit at his little house in Berkeley Square, near Gunter's; old Mr. Washington Hibbert, whose trousers (box-pleated at the waist) and blue frock coat and extraordinary hat were well known in the metropolis (for years he never left London for a day, and used to say with a smile that when everyone had left London, and it was supposed to be empty, he still found more people there than anywhere else). And there were many more of the same delightful type. Crimean men, like

Cardigan and Sir George Wombwell and so on, were, as it were, mere youths in this assembly of old dandies, and Lord Langford ("Paddy") was regarded as a child! I was looked upon as a baby wheeled over from Paris somehow in a perambulator; but they were all very kind and charming to the infant, who half expected every moment to see the door open and George Brummell saunter in. I met there a very extraordinary man, who only died, aged nearly 100, just before the Great War, a Mr. Kinder, whose brother had knocked down the Regent! It was at White's. The regent and his brother the Duke of Clarence came in and were amusing their listeners by telling how they had been teasing and playing all kinds of tricks on their poor crazy father. Young Kinder, very indignant, jumped up, called both the Royal Princes cads and bullies to treat their poor helpless father in that fashion, and, when the Regent raised his stick, young Kinder knocked him down with a blow on the forehead. That is an incident hitherto unrecorded in print, I believe, but well known to certain old fogies with good memories. The crumbs of history which some of these old but very vigorous dandies let fall were interesting indeed. For example, Admiral Rous told me that Nelson's intimacy with Lady Hamilton was practically platonic: that Horatia was not his child; that it was physically impossible that he could have been her father; and the gallant Admiral told me he had this direct f... one who ought certainly to have known what she ...

saying—namely Lady Nelson! Old Mr. Anson told me that he was with the Prince when the Duke of Clarence (afterwards William IV) went down to Portsmouth and seeing a friend across the street called out to him, "I hear you are the greatest blackguard in Portsmouth!" To which the other replied, "I am very sorry your Royal Highness has come down here to take away my character!" I remember on one occasion amusing these delightful old gentlemen by telling them of an incident which had only happened a few days before and which I had heard from Kenneth Howard. A bishop—I think it was of Worcester but am not certain—was waiting with his chaplain on the platform at Reading Station when a handsome and very distinguished looking young man came up to him, bowed and said: "Good-morning, my Lord!" "Oh! Good morning," carelessly replied the absent-minded prelate. "How's your father?" The gentleman looked surprised, and then said, "Oh, my father's been dead some years!" "Oh, yes, of course," said the Bishop. "I meant your mother, of course. How is she?" "Oh, my mother's quite well, thank you, my lord." Just then a train came in, and the young man bowed and left. "Who is that young fellow?" inquired the Bishop of his chaplain. "That's the Duke of Connaught, my Lord," was the reply. If his Royal Highness reads these lines, no doubt he will remember the incident.

Reverting to English noblemen of the old school, I am happy to remember Lord Clarendon as a friend

of my childhood—of course I am referring to the fourth Earl. He was one of the most delightful and lovable of men, and, moreover, a type of public servant not easy to find nowadays—never seeking self-aggrandisement. Twice he was offered a marquisate, and twice he refused the Viceroyalty of India. When the Garter is conferred on a person who already has the Grand Cross of the Bath, it is customary to return the last-named decoration. Lord Clarendon, of course, did so, but was commanded by the Queen to wear both orders. He came over to Paris just after he had received this very flattering command from the Queen and told my father about it with just pride.

Lord Clarendon first met G. P. R. James at our house in Paris. The two became fast friends, and the funny stories of the novelist greatly amused the statesman, who had a very keen sense of humour. I remember one of the yarns. A Mr. Marshall O. Roberts of New York, having more dollars than culture, determined to become a Mæcenas, and gave a series of receptions in Gotham to men of letters and learning, artists and all the "highbrows" of the day. His first "kick off" was unfortunate. He brought the timid, bashful, retiring author of *The Scarlet Letter* up to a statue of Psyche he had just bought, and inquired with exultant pride, "Well, Mr. Hawthorne, what do you think of my Physic? You're the very man to appreciate her. Ain't she just a peach?" Whether poor Nathaniel fled to the House of Seven Gables and locked himself in I know not (he used to

hide behind a tree when he saw on the road from Lennox to Stockbridge people coming to see him in his little cottage), but this ridiculous story was the delight of New York for some time. When G. P. R. James accepted the hospitality of the unlettered but amiable merchant, wishing to be especially courteous and flattering, Roberts said to him: "Mr. James, I can't express to you my great admiration for your achievements in the world of fiction. I have devoured all your novels with delight, and really can't tell you which I like the best; but, perhaps on the whole, I think your masterpiece is *The Last Days of Pompeii!*" To which G. P. R. replied with a smile: "Well, Mr. Roberts, I'm sure it is very kind and flattering of you to say so." (By the way, G. P. R. James's handwriting was as bad as Dean Stanley's, Henry Irving's, or Horace Greeley's, and must have caused much anguish to publishers' readers in the days before the typewriter.)

I remember Lord Clarendon meeting at our house Mr. George Peabody, the well-known American millionaire and philanthropist, and there was a somewhat comic incident connected with this. Peabody was a rather rough diamond, very simple and unaffected, but painfully fond of perpetually telling you of his early poverty and hard struggle to reach even the foot of the ladder up which in time he climbed so high. He was always ready with a remedy he had discovered for any of the thousand and one ailments of humanity which happened to be mentioned. So when Lord Clarendon said that

Marshal Narvaëz told him he suffered agony from cold feet, Peabody broke in: "Cold feet? Oh, I used to suffer from that too, but I don't now!" "How's that?" asked Lord Clarendon. "Have you a remedy?" "Yes," said the artless millionaire, "and it's very simple. Whenever I feel my feet beginning to get cold, no matter where I am, I take off my shoes and stockings and rub my bare feet on the carpet! It's the only thing!" Lord Clarendon's face was a study.

The ferocious and cold-footed Narvaëz was another of the supposed cruel and hard-hearted men who came often to our house and was very kind to me (he gave me the first rocking horse I ever had.) The story of what he is supposed to have said, and very likely did say on his deathbed, is perhaps of the nature of a hoary chestnut; but, as being very characteristic of the man, it is worth telling. The priest had just administered Extreme Unction to the dying warrior and then said: "I trust your Excellency, now on the threshold of Eternity and the partaker of Divine Grace and pardon, has forgiven all his enemies!" "Enemies?" gasped Narvaëz, "I have none." "Thank God for that," exclaimed the priest. "That is the true spirit of love." "No," murmured the Marshal in a faint voice, "I have no enemies. I have killed them all!"

By the way, a fact connected with the beautiful Eugénie de Guzman and Lord Clarendon which is but little known, and which has certainly never been recorded in print before, is that two members of the

Rothschild family—I do not care to be precise for private reasons—fell in love with her, and either of them would gladly have married her but for the intervention of Lord Clarendon. Splendid settlements would have been made, and Mme. de Montijo was far from being averse from the idea of having a millionaire son-in-law although a Jew; but Lord Clarendon persuaded her to put the idea out of her mind, although at that time Louis Napoleon had not yet begun to pay court to the fair Andalusian. When this courtship did begin, Lord Clarendon arranged that the newly-created Emperor and the young lady should meet privately—I may even say secretly—to avoid comment and scandal, at the apartment of a friend, an English lady, Mrs. Gould; and it was there that Louis Napoleon proposed to and was accepted by the beautiful Eugénie. When Baron James Rothschild saw there was no longer any hope in that quarter for any member of his family, he accepted the situation very philosophically and foreseeing all that such protection might lead to, took, with the approval of the Emperor, Mme. de Montijo and her beautiful daughter under his special wing just before the engagement of the young lady to Napoleon III was officially announced. And this timely protection was necessary, for Mme. de Montijo and her lovely daughter had a host of very powerful, jealous, and envious enemies in Paris society; and, of course, neither Lord Clarendon nor the Emperor could do much to help; whereas the Red Shield was all power-

ful. The scene at the ball at the Tuileries when Mme. Drouyn de Lhuys openly insulted the young Spanish lady, who was on the arm of James de Rothschild, and how the Emperor came to the rescue, is too well known to bear repeating. The only effect it had was to precipitate the engagement and the public announcement thereof; but the Baron never forgave the husband of the woman who had insulted the lady he was protecting, and Drouyn de Lhuys, to his endless regret, was never asked down to Ferrières again.

Speaking of Ferrières, I was never there, I am sorry to say, for on three different occasions when I was honoured by an invitation I was prevented from going. But my father knew the splendid place well, and I have often heard him tell how all the guests would go with Baron James before dinner to see him feed the carp—very old fish, of which one is said to have had in its nose a ring reputed to date from the days of François I.

The late Prince de Sagan told me of how, when a very young man, he had tried to have a deal in diamonds with Baron James, and had failed through an excess of enthusiasm, being unmindful of the famous advice given by his great relative the ex-Bishop of Autun—"Surtout pas trop de zèle!" The diamonds in question were eardrops and of extraordinary beauty. Ismail Pasha (through Djemal Pasha) had asked the Prince to try to sell them to the Baron, who was very fond of him. So down he went with them to the Rue Laffitte. The Baron examined them

carefully, told him at once he knew where they came from (the Rothschilds seem to know everything), approved of them, and would probably have bought them, partly to do his young friend a good turn, but for the rapturous enthusiasm of the Prince, who exclaimed: "Aren't they marvellous, Baron? Aren't they perfect? And for only a million francs too! Why that's cheap enough, isn't it, to become possessed of the most beautiful sight in the world!" Then the Baron "dried up," as the Americans say; gave the jewels back to the young Talleyrand-Périgord, and said with a smile: "The most beautiful sight in the world, you say? *Mon enfant,* you are mistaken. Have you ever seen a million francs in golden louis spread out on the table? That I think is a far more beautiful sight than these eardrops, which I should think dear at half that sum. So take them away, *mon ami.* I don't want them."

The good looks, cleverness, and charming manners of Prince de Sagan were his by inheritance. His mother was the celebrated Dorothy Comtesse de Talleyrand-Périgord, famous for her wit and beauty. She had been married, when a mere child, to a nephew of the great diplomatist and statesman, the ex-Bishop of Autun; but she soon left the nephew for the uncle, with whom she lived as secretary, accompanying him in that capacity to the Congress of Vienna. When the great diplomatist died, his fair secretary, after having established her right to the Principality of Sagan, went to live in Berlin in the

splendid house on Unter den Linden, now the Soviet Embassy. There she met and fell in love with the handsomest man of his day, Prince Felix Lichnowsky, and by him had the charming grand seigneur and dandy I have been speaking of and with whom I was intimate from my early boyhood up to the time of his death. All the Lichnowskys were famous for their charm and good looks and, oddly enough, two of the most popular men in London when war was declared ten years ago were Prince Lichnowsky, the German Ambassador, and Pouilly Mensdorff, the Austrian, both most delightful men. I knew Pouilly Mensdorff's mother, Princess Dietrichstein, in Vienna, where her salon was one of the most select in the Kaiserstadt—far more exclusive than that, for example, of Princess Metternich.

Personally, the two chief incidents which I have in my memory regarding Baron James Rothschild are how frightened I was to hear him tell my father that the old gentleman who had just left us, Baron Mollerus, formerly Dutch Minister to Lisbon, had the evil eye, and how only a few evenings before he had caused a chandelier to fall at the Austrian Embassy by simply looking at it. As old Mollerus always used to play with me when he came to see us I was naturally very much frightened (it was news to me though known to most people) and attributed an attack of measles I had just afterwards to the Jettatore, whom ever afterwards I carefully avoided. Then I have always remembered with much amusement a story

my mother used to tell about Baron James. It was at the Gallieras, and quite early in the evening. My mother and Mme. Lori Schwartzenberg were standing near the door talking to the Baron when a well-known Irish peeress, who had the reputation of being a kleptomaniac, came up as she was leaving the room and was, as usual, very effusive—"My darling this," "My dearest that," and so on. Then she turned and "gushed" on old Rothschild, who abhorred her, and exclaimed in her execrable French: "Et vous, cher Barong, toujours charmong: plus jeune que jamais." Baron James bowed and grinned, "Why leaving so early, *chère* Comtesse? And *before they've counted the spoons!*"

CHAPTER XIV

I HAVE mentioned the greatest cad I have ever met —Herbert Bismarck: and the greatest grand seigneur I have ever met—the Duc d'Aumale. If I were asked as to the greatest bore ever inflicted on me, it would be a harder query to reply to, and I am afraid I should have to have recourse to "Roll Call," or "Absence," or "Bill," or say "Legion," for they are many. Of course, there are bores and bores. There is the bore who is simply annihilating and crushing; and there is the bore who is amusing as a study. Of the first class—the cold, lifeless paving-stone kind of biped who firmly places himself on your quivering senses and blandly brays and bleats, I think the most aggressive specimen I ever knew was Professor John Stuart Blackie. He positively swept you off the ground with his torrent of heather-scented words. He walked, or rather stalked, sideways, for his body (and mind) had been so twined in the plaiden that he could not even come through the rye of the Champs Elysées like an ordinary man who has been used to having his nether limbs covered since early childhood. I say the Champs Elysées, because one of the last times I saw him was in the Avenue Gabriel. I sighted him afar off; saw him cautiously approaching someone; and, when I came nearer, found he had

captured poor George Sheffield (they were near the garden gate of our Embassy) to whom he was pouring out quotations from Aristotle, Shakespeare, Goethe, St. Paul—the usual marmalade with which he sought to sweeten the utterly tasteless "parritch" of his talk, which, however, rather resembled haggis, for it contained odd bits of learning fastened in a skin of good memory. Blackie's sense of humour, except of the severely hearty crack-on-the-back "Green grow the rushes, oh" type, was like snakes in Ireland; and of course this laid him open to all kinds of good-natured wounds playfully inflicted by the wit and contempt-barbed daggers of cynics.

Once at the hospitable salon in Upper Grosvenor Street of a very highbrow lady from Boston, U.S.A., who was wont to go into the highways and byways and gather together her guests, deliciously indifferent as to whether they would assimilate or not, notability being the only credential necessary, I found—what cynic from Gehenna planned it?—Blackie and Swinburne in the same room together! True, the little red-haired jumpy bard had then been respectablised by Watts-Dunton, and transposed from Martell to Guinness, but still I feared an explosion, for I knew how Algernon Charles hated empty and blatant pose. As a matter of fact, no blood was actually spilt, but the tamed poet tiger of Putney showed his claws twice: once when the hostess, seeking his autograph, begged him to write some verses in her album, and

he, under the very shadow of Blackie's shaggy eyebrows, wrote:

"There was a young lady of Tottenham,
Who drank a whole bottle of lottenum,
Her last words came dreamily,
But it pleased us extremily,
To hear a good deal about God in 'em."

and then, not many minutes later, when the hostess very incautiously asked him what was the most awe-inspiring sight he could imagine, Swinburne positively yelled, looked at me and, grinning, replied, "Tyndall on heat!" The great *savant,* the title of whose famous text-book Swinburne now so wickedly misused, and who was no Adonis, had just left us.

Another recollection I have connected with Professor Blackie is rather comic: one of those incongruities which would lead one sometimes to suspect that the

"Divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will"

smiles oft-times as he shapes. About six months before this meeting of Blackie and Swinburne in the house of the American Lady in London, I had heard Blackie say to Lord Campbell in Paris (they were over there in connection with some plan, which fell through, about a new Presbyterian church in the French capital), "Well, there's one thing, Lord Campbell, we must be thankful for—that we're both of us Scotsmen. I've studied the question from every point of view; and, believe me, the Scottish race is

the most pure in its morals of any in Europe—pure and modest. An immodest Scot is as rare to find as a truthful Irishman."

The last time I saw this extraordinary Gaelic gasbag was at Andrew Lang's in Marloes Road. The brindle-haired one was not there, but Blackie had come by appointment to be interviewed by an American reporter; and I dropped in quite by accident. The gentleman from the States was "Comin' through the Rye" (whisky understood) but was not quite through; in other words was still slightly alcoholised and inclined to be rude, and Blackie was very gruff. His views on some religious matter were being taken down for some Presbyterian print in New York. I only stayed a moment, but I confess I should like to have seen the report of that conversation, for it was becoming heated when I left (the American had exhausted "darned" and was rapidly heading for "damned," and when he got there I knew there would be a Caledonian explosion) for so voluble was the newspaper man, that Blackie could not squeeze in Goethe, or Aristotle, or any of his usual companions in colloquy.

Speaking of Andrew Lang and matters theological reminds me of a ridiculous story he told me of how a clever young undergraduate at his college took honours in the theological school—a low class it is true but still a class—by sheer bluff and cheek. He knew nothing about any of the subjects dealt with in the examination paper, and so he ignored them; but

he launched forth into disquisitions of his own; combating quite imaginary views supposed to be held by theologians entirely of his own imagination, choosing for choice German names taken haphazard from tradespeople in the town. This kind of thing for example, "I cannot bring myself to accept Guggenheim's views on the Theotokos"—Guggenheim being a dealer in faked furniture, in the High Street, which he palmed off on guileless young Dons as genuine and rare: or "Nothing Bernstein can say will alter my views regarding the Eirenicon" and so forth—Bernstein being a Semitic seller of stale fruit in Holywell. All this the amazed examiners read with bated breath. Their own knowledge of modern theology was very superficial. The names of the unorthodox thinkers, to whom he alluded with proper coldness, were strangely familiar to their ears (very naturally) but they could not for the moment place them. When *vivâ voce* came, this cynical jester feigned illness, and the examiners were not sorry in their hearts, for they were naturally reluctant to show their ignorance concerning the views of Guggenheim, Bernstein and others. He was therefore excused *vivâ voce* and was smuggled into a Fourth Class. The Margaret Professor meeting Lang in Oriel Lane shortly after said: "You have a young man at your college who seems remarkably conversant with the works of all the latest German theologians, Mr——." The brindle-haired one, to whom the youthful "spoofer" had confided his secret, had to bury his face suddenly in his

pocket-handkerchief under pretence of an approaching sneeze. I told this story to Renan and he was delighted. He had no liking for the theologians of the last few centuries and was never tired of abusing the French courtier-priests of the days of the Grand Monarque, and especially of Bossuet, whom he called "l'idole de l'admiration routinière: esprit absolument borné: Sorboniste encroûté."

Renan himself was a superficial man, and was thought much more of in England than he was in his own country or in any other; but he had a keen sense of humour (as had also his son, who was constantly with him) and was always delighted to see me; so whenever anything very ludicrous came my way, I would go and tell him. By the way, Renan did not like Georges Sand—"la femme à l'œil sombre"; but, strangely enough, he liked Prince Napoleon, and I remember making rather a *faux pas* once when I told him how the Lady of Nohant had said to Plon Plon —"Monseigneur, vous ne ferez jamais rien de bon: vous avez trop de cotillons dans la trompette." When I narrated this I had just heard it from Mme. de Gallifet—Renan frowned, said nothing, and scratched his head, which was a very funny shape and one not usually associated with great intellect, broad below but narrowing at the top. But referring to the ever conspiring (and in the most idiotic, childish and melodramatic way) Plon Plon I must, while I think of it, jot down a characteristic fact but little known. In Brussels, after the Déchéance, and while the Ger-

man cannons were still threatening Paris, Prince Napoleon and half-paralysed old M. Levert, formerly Prefect of Marseilles, actually drew up, in concert with Conti, a list (after the fashion of Sylla) of 2,000 persons proscribed, to be punished on the Restoration of the Empire! Incredible, but absolutely true. Paul de Cassagnac, who told me this himself, was publishing a French paper in Brussels at the time (Plon Plon, a very Harpagon as regards money, had first promised and then refused to subsidise it, and the necessary money was found by Dusausoy, the old tailor of the Imperial Court), and Prince Napoleon asked him to help to draw up this ridiculous list, but my friend Paul was, of course, not such an arrant ass and declined.

But to return to Renan and his appreciation of funny stories, I used sometimes to clamber up and see that very sententious old gentleman Xavier Marmier in his little apartment in the Rue St. Thomas d'Acquin, and on one occasion, talking of old times and old customs in France, he told me (what I already knew) that the King of France enjoyed the title of eldest Son of the Church; and then added with a smile, "But your Prime Minister enjoys a privilege somewhat similar." "How?" I asked. "I don't understand."

"Why, of course—at least I know Mr. Gladstone did—Elder Brother of the Trinity." The word "House" had evidently escaped old Marmier, and I had not the heart to undeceive him, for he delighted

in making historical discoveries of but little known facts; but, remembering how Renan especially prided himself on knowing us and our ways and customs, I told him of Marmier's delicious mistake. He scratched his head—a habit of his—and chuckled heartily. Renan married a niece and adopted daughter of Ary Scheffer, and about this great artist here is a coincidence but little known. Ary Scheffer was one of the two men who brought the message to Neuilly that made Louis Philippe king; and it was his fate also to walk on the left side of the King, through the Garden of the Tuileries on the morning of the 24th February, 1848, and put him and Queen Marie Amelia into the carriage which was to bear them away for ever into exile, murmuring as he did so, "Just like Charles X." Renan told me this.

CHAPTER XV

I HAVE from time to time been brought in contact with many persons who knew Abraham Lincoln very well,—both his private secretaries, John G. Nicolay and John Hay—Lord Lyons and most of the members of the Diplomatic Corps in Washington during his Presidency—Bertinatti; Blondeel; Stoeckl; Tassara (the poet Minister Plenipotentiary from Spain); Barreda; Mercier de l'Ostende; de Geoffroy; Piper; Rässeloff; von Gerolt.

Everyone who knew Lincoln liked him; those who knew him well loved him. His strength (I am now quoting Lord Lyons) lay in the fact that he was quite an ordinary man, except indeed that he was absolutely honest and could not be influenced by any kind of temptation to deviate a hair's breadth from what he considered right. In this particular he may perhaps lay claim to be called by cynics an extraordinary man; but from the point of view of intellect, statesmanship, diplomacy, he was rather below than above the ordinary standard and this not only gave him his first chance, but also made him the safe and true guide to triumph of his country in the greatest crisis of her history. Douglas, Breckenridge, and other candidates were considered dangerous; so the unknown lawyer of Springfield, the gaunt whilom

railsplitter from Illinois, was elected President partly in order that no more dangerous man should become chief of the State at that time of peril, and partly because each and every party thought him a mere puppet they could make dance to any tune they cared to whistle.

But they were all very woefully mistaken: gaunt Abraham Lincoln, with his loose-fitting, shabby, black clothes, big, horny hands, deeply seamed, sallow face, and true, sad eyes, could only dance to the tunes his heart whistled—namely "Hail, Columbia!" and "The Star-spangled Banner"; or, in other words, every thought of this simple, unambitious, pure-hearted country lawyer sprang from true patriotism; every action was sanctified by unswerving and unselfish love of his country. This it was, his patriotism, his unselfishness, his absence of ambition, and his absolute honesty—this splendid combination—that led Lincoln to save his country where a really great but less scrupulous man might have encompassed her ruin for his own aggrandisement, and finally brought to him the crown of martyrdom, just as he was comfortably sitting in his rocking chair at Ford's Theatre enjoying *Our American Cousin*.

Now regarding "the deep damnation of his taking off," Lord Lyons gave me some very interesting particulars not generally known but which he had from a friend of his who was also a great friend of the murdered President. This gentleman, according to Lord Lyons, had had a very large silk flag (the Stars

and Stripes, of course) made for presentation to the Treasury Department, but the presentation not yet having taken place, the authorities of Ford's Theatre approached him with a view to letting them have this enormous and very magnificent flag to drape the Presidential box on the night of the gala performance. To this Lord Lyon's friend gladly consented, and the huge banner played no inconsiderable part in the tragedy, as we shall see.

On the morning of the gala performance this gentleman called at the White House to see Mr. Lincoln and found him looking even unusually tired and careworn. "You don't look well, President," he said. "Why don't you stay at home to-night instead of going to the theatre?" But Lincoln smiled sadly and shook his head. "Oh, I must go," he said. "I can't disappoint the public. It's bad enough as it is; Seward, as you know, is in bed; so he can't go." Then he mentioned two or three of the notabilities of the moment as not going, and concluded with a sigh: "So you see I really must go; it would be too bad if they didn't at least see me. So I shall go, but I may come away before the end."

And he did; true, simple, noble-hearted Abe came away before the end in very deed.

So the two friends parted, an arrangement having been made for an early meeting on the morrow to discuss the case of a Mr. Abner which was going before the Committee of Ways and Means.

That night just as Lord Lyon's friend was going

to bed at Willard's Hotel,—he had his bedroom candlestick in his hand and was leaving the hall to go upstairs—in rushed a newsboy with the awful cry: "President shot!" "President shot!" Hastily putting on his greatcoat and hat, this gentleman rushed to the scene of the tragedy (it was not far to go) and was just in time to see the body carried from the theatre to a lodging-house opposite. Lincoln had been shot about ten, but he never recovered consciousness, and according to one of the surgeons (Dr. Verdi, if I remember rightly) never suffered any pain, the bullet having reached the spine and caused cerebral paralysis. Now here comes in the part played by the big flag. What had happened was this. Wilkes Booth had gone to the theatre early in the afternoon and bored a hole in the door of the box so that he might sight his victim. That evening, after peering through this hole and seeing the President quietly laughing, he quickly opened the door, shot Lincoln, and then crying out the motto of Virginia, "Sic semper tyrannis!" he leapt on to the stage after he had tried to stab Major Rathbone, who was in the box. But he had not counted on the voluminous flag in which his spurs got entangled as he sprang, and the result was a fractured thigh. Harry Hawk (Asa Trenchard) was on the stage, and Miss Laura Keene just coming on, but all made way for the handsome villain (he was famous for his good looks, and his photographs show his fame in this respect was deserved), who brandishing a Derringer pistol rushed,

stumbled, scrambled past them to the stage door at the back, where a horse was awaiting him, on which he galloped across the Potomac over the Long Bridge into Virginia. He later on had his leg set by Dr. Mudd, who was imprisoned but afterwards pardoned for thus assisting the murderer in his escape. Booth was shot in a burning barn by a fanatic named Corbett, though strict orders were given to take him alive.

A friend of ours, young Bure, a natural son of Napoleon III, was present at the execution of the assassin's accomplice Mrs. Surratt, and said it was rather more comic than impressive, for, the weather being very hot, the priest carried an enormous sunshade, and kept mopping the perspiration from his face with a large red pocket handkerchief as he droned out the prayers for one about to die. In connexion with the tragedy, I may also mention that Harold Portalis told me he remembered very well when in Washington the extraordinary moon on the night of the murder—blood red and hanging down as it were very low from the heavens—a peculiar phenomenon referred to by Walt Whitman in his well-known poem on the passing of Abraham Lincoln.

Lord Lyons was very fond of Lincoln, and this regard being reciprocated, they became comparatively intimate—far more intimate indeed than was ever known by the general public, for the President knew our Minister had plenty of common sense and could be trusted, and neither of these things could be

said for every member of his Cabinet. One story Lord Lyons used to tell of Lincoln was very funny. When the news of the birth of the Duke of Clarence came to our Legation in Washington, Lord Lyons got into his war paint and proceeded to the White House to announce the fact officially to the President. There was never any kind of etiquette at the White House in Lincoln's time, and on this occasion Lord Lyons was kept waiting for a few minutes, as a Cabinet meeting was being held. At last he was admitted into the room where the meeting had been taking place, and found Lincoln alone, seated by a small table, looking completely exhausted and indeed almost sprawling over the table. His tired eyes expressed no recognition as he simply nodded as if in a dream to the representative of her Britannic Majesty. Lord Lyons then began in a deliberate, official tone: "I have the honour to announce to your Excellency that her Royal Highness, the Princess of Wales," etc. When this speech was over, Lord Lyons paused, expecting, of course, some kind of response. But none came. Lincoln did not even look at him, seemed almost as if asleep, made no response, and appeared not to have heard him. So Lord Lyons began once more and when the recital was over paused again. Still no response; still the same apparent semi-somnolence. Realising the absurdity of the situation, Lord Lyons had to bite his lips to keep from smiling; but as it was his duty to make the announcement of the Royal birth, after a

short pause, he began all over again. This time, Lincoln appeared to wake up. As Lord Lyons proceeded in his official narrative, a smile stole over the President's face as he seemed by degrees to realise what was being said. Then, when the announcement came for the third time to a close, he leant forward and, giving that confirmed bachelor Lord Lyons a playful dig in the ribs, exclaimed, "Bravo! Glad to hear it. Go thou and do likewise!"

Personally I have had the honour of sitting on the great railsplitter's lap. It came about in this way. It was at Grover's Opera House in Washington. We were just passing through from Canada, and I was then a mere boy. There was a dreadful German woman named Rotter singing in that doleful opera Beethoven's *Fidelio*. The President's box was directly opposite ours. Lincoln came in very late with Nicolay and sat down in a rocking chair; produced an apple from his pocket and began very quietly to eat it, simply tearing off pieces with his teeth, as schoolboys do, while he gently rocked to and fro. Nicolay caught sight of my father and mother, told the President, who leaned forward and beckoned to us. So we all went round as an *entr'acte* was just beginning; and Lincoln (who was very fond of children) at once hoisted me on to his lap, his sad, kind eyes looking with roguish tenderness into my half-frightened face as he gently patted me with his big, hard, horny hand.

By the way, Lincoln made a remark to Lord Lyons

which I could never quite understand, coming from a man so truly and unfeignedly a Christian as he undoubtedly was. "Lyons," he said, "do you know I sometimes think life is an *obscene jest!*" These are the very words he used; and not only are they silly, and indeed almost meaningless, but it seems incredible they should have come from his lips, which they undoubtedly did. That Lincoln had a keen sense of humour is, of course, beyond all question: but it is equally true that he was wholly innocent of more than half the *bons mots* ascribed to him.

Lowell told me that once when speaking to Lincoln of a common friend, a silly hypochondriac, on the President remarking that the sick man had called in a second physician, he had quoted to him:

> "A single doctor like a sculler plies:
> The patient lingers and then slowly dies.
> But two physicians like a pair of oars
> Shall waft him swiftly to the Stygian shores."

Which lines so delighted Lincoln that he wrote them down lest they should escape his memory.

Mrs. Lincoln was not, I have been informed, a very pleasing personality and her love of money and utter absence of delicacy of feeling as to how she obtained it are said to have caused honest Abe great anguish on more than one occasion. For example, the splendid flowers and fruit from the hothouses of the White House are, of course, for Government use only and not the private property of the family

which may happen for the time being to be inhabiting the executive mansion. But Mrs. Lincoln, I have been told, sold them and pocketed the money. She offered them to Lord Lyons, and he, of course, refused to buy what he knew the wife of his friend had no right to sell; but other members of the Diplomatic Service in Washington were not so scrupulous, and at a dinner given to my father and mother by the Belgian Minister, Blondeel, all the fruit and flowers were bought from Mrs. Lincoln. When this trafficking came to the knowledge of the President he stopped it at once, and was so upset by the discovery that he was really ill for a few days. Bob, the eldest son of the President, I knew years later in London, a charming chap. Poor little tongue-tied Tad whom his father (who was photographed with him) adored, and whose pitiful cries that awful April night "Popper tot! Popper tot!" they say were heartrending, I never knew. I always had a firm conviction in my mind that Lincoln and Disraeli would have understood and liked each other had they ever met; and I often had it on my lips to say so to my idol, but never dared to do so. I told Lord Lyons of this idea of mine, and at first he looked surprised, but then, after a moment's reflection, agreed with me and indeed said: "Yes, I'm sure you're right. But it's rather a funny idea."

A young fellow who was in the room at our Embassy in Paris when Lord Lyons said this to me, made at Eton, when he was there, one of the quickest

witty remarks I ever heard a boy make. I am referring to the late Sir Edward Hulse, who married Lord Burnham's daughter, and whose private tutor at home was the author of *The Row in Dame Europa's School.* I had gone down to Windsor with the late Duke of Sutherland, and we had young Hulse out to lunch with us at the White Hart. Speaking of a certain lady in London Society who was going about telling false and scandalous tales about the Prince of Wales, I said, in mock sententiousness: "She's clothed with falsehood as with a garment." "Scant clothing that, I should think," laughed Stafford (as he then was). "What's it like, I wonder?" "Oh," quietly remarked the pale, round-faced, smooth-haired, demure little boy in the jacket, "It's the habit of lying I suppose!"

Young Hulse (he was young then, and indeed young when he died in South Africa) was the first person ever to tell a yarn which is now a hoary chestnut, but it is so funny that it bears repeating. Hulse used to say he heard it himself said before a magistrate at Salisbury. A very indignant Irish laundress came before his Worship and loudly clamoured for a separation order on the ground of cruelty. "He knocks me about, yer Honour—he does truly. He knocks me down and he kicks me, and that's the truth, yer Honour." "How very shocking," said the magistrate, "but I'm afraid, my good woman, that that's not quite enough for you to claim a separation order!" "What! not enough? Not enough when he

gives me a black eye?" "Well, that's very dreadful, of course, but I'm afraid it's not quite enough in itself. Now, in addition to that, if, for example, you could only prove he'd been unfaithful to you, why——" But here the woman interrupted him. "Unfaithful to me! Is that what ye want? Bejabers he has that! Why the dirty blackguard wasn't even the father of me last child!"

Reverting to Lord Lyons, the pure placidity of the Hôtel Borghese under his rule was rudely and very comically broken one morning by the sudden irruption of—*devinez qui*—Cora Pearl! The consternation of the chief and of the Hare may well be imagined.

Young Duval, merely to seek notoriety, had made a mock attempt to commit suicide in Cora's rooms, and she had in consequence been ordered to leave France as a loose woman and an undesirable alien! "But I'm not a loose woman!" cried Cora. "I'm a *propriétaire* and have valuable property at Ermenonville. Here are the title deeds. I'm a British subject, born of respectable parents, and here's my birth certificate. I claim the protection of my Ambassador!" Cora was quite right and the French magistrate quite wrong. She was not a "fille de joie," but the owner of very valuable landed estate in the country; so she could account for her income in a respectable way, and thus had every right to seek the protection of our Embassy. Sheffield kept the copy of the birth certificate of the famous Aspasia;

I copied it, and here it is: a document of the greatest historical interest and value, copies of which should be (and doubtless are) carefully preserved in the Vatican Library and in the British Museum. I have forgotten the official form, but here is the substance of this legal chronicle, which is an extract from the Register of the District of East Stonehouse setting forth that Emma Crouch was born there on the 23rd day of February, 1842, the daughter of Frederick William Nichols Crouch, Professor of Music, and of Lydia Crouch formerly Pearson.

Regarding a silly book, purporting to be the memoirs of Cora Pearl, I have a confession to make. I am to some extent the cause of its existence. It came about in this way. The son of an old friend of mine to whom I was under great obligations for innumerable acts of kindness was studying in Paris to be a doctor (I will not mention his name because he is, at this present writing, one of the most popular physicians in the French capital), and as the lad knew nobody outside his native Auvergne, I was asked to do what I could for him. The boy had journalistic aspirations, and I gave him a letter to Arthur Meyer (it was before the Boulanger nonsense and when the owner of the *Gaulois* was living in the Rue d'Amsterdam), who employed him for a time on his newspaper. I also gave him a letter to that extraordinary man Edouard Magnier, and I think he did some work for the *Evènement,* but as Magnier was always a little afraid of me (he told me so) I

don't think he did very much for my *protégé*. Well, one day, when this young man was with me—it was quite early in the morning and I was in bed when he called—I happened to want to communicate with Cora, and asked him laughingly if he would mind taking the letter. He jumped at the idea of thus becoming acquainted with the famous *demi-mondaine;* and, while I was writing the letter for him to take, an idea struck me. "Gigi," I said, "I've just thought of a good possibility for you." *"Dites."* "Cora is sure to receive you personally and be very charming. Don't make love to her; you haven't enough money; but tell her who you are, and that you'd like to write her memoirs!" The lad stared at me in amazement. "Her memoirs?" he echoed.

"Yes; of course, I don't mean her real memoirs, for they would have to be published by Priapus at the Porcellian Press, edited by Eros and lavishly red-lettered by Libitina. But if Cora consents—and as she is hard up just now it is quite possible she may—you can write any nonsense you like, submitting, of course, everything to her, and I dare say you can get a publisher to give you a decent sum for it." The lad jumped at the idea; but Cora at first refused to consider it, much to young Gigi's disappointment. Some days later, however, I met her at the Maison Laffitte races and put her on a winner. She then asked me about the young man; laughed heartily at the idea of writing her memoirs, saying, "It's only you who'd ever have had such a funny idea!" and then told me

to send the young man to her again. I did so. The book was written, but I never saw it. I believe, however, that it brought in to the joint authors quite a decent sum of money.

CHAPTER XVI

I HAVE referred in *Uncensored Recollections,* and in *Things I Shouldn't Tell* to innocent and harmless little advantages I took from time to time of the friendship with which the Prince of Wales honoured me. Here is another instance. The late Lord Crawford, whom I knew from boyhood, got to know in Paris (I don't remember how, but I think through Mme. Sinanino of Alexandria, who lived in Paris in the Boulevard Haussmann) a Persian youth who had been brought to Europe as a mere boy by the Shah, on the occasion of the first visit of that grotesque savage to Europe, and left at Windsor in the care of Sir John Cowell to be educated and taught the English language and European habits and manners. This lad's name was Mirza Rahim Feranza. He was, I think, really not more than twenty, although he looked about forty, for he was fat and beginning to get bald, but his mentality was that of an ordinary European boy of twelve, except for his knowledge of things he ought not to have known. He was not more than four feet high, and when he met any man whom he liked, he would take his hand, swing it up and down, and begin singing, or rather chanting, in his native tongue words very melancholy and unintelligible in their Persian wrappings. That this was highly ridic-

ulous and somewhat disconcerting to the passive resister whose hand was being swung to a Persian dirge of welcome I need hardly say. One instance in particular I remember. I was just saying good-bye to a lady at the corner of the Rue de Cirque and the Avenue Gabriel, when this little fat Persian in a black frock coat and fez very much on the side of his head, rushed up, seized my surprised and unwilling hand and began swinging it and chanting to the amazement of the lady and the passers by. After that, I always tried to avoid meeting my young, bald-headed friend in public. So much for the comic aspect, but here comes in the serious side of this Oriental episode. He had been, owing to some inexplicable and even incredible oversight, entirely forgotten and neglected; had never been sent to school, but was left to pick up such knowledge of the English language and customs as he could from the kitchen maids and stable boys of Windsor Castle! The result was that the English of Mirza Rahim Feranza, though fluent enough, was not that of the salons of Mayfair, but of the East End, the peculiar nasal snarl of which he had caught to perfection. He said "nuffink" and "Gor bly me," and a few minutes after Crawford had introduced him to me he exclaimed, in reply to my question as to how he liked Paris, "Wot o', she bumps!" Now, of course, there would not have been the least harm in this kind of English being freely aired in the land of the Bulbul, but there would have been terrible trouble for Sir John Cowell if his

neglect of this wretched lad had come to be known to those in authority in this country; and a crisis seemed imminent, for not only the lad's Imperial father was expected to arrive in Paris to take him back to Teheran with him, but the Prince and Princess of Wales were coming in a few days to the Hôtel Bristol and the wretched boy had been informed by the Persian Envoy in Paris that his Royal Highness wished to see him on the morning after his arrival. What was to be done? I saw terrible trouble in store for poor harmless Cowell. Of course, Queen Victoria could not have him bowstrung even if "the Asylum of the Universe" (one of the titles of the Persian ruler) desired it; but he would most certainly be disgraced; for his offence—one of omission—was just the very kind our dear Queen held in most special abhorrence. I sent for the lad and cross-examined him. It was even worse than I expected, for not only was his language vile, but he seemed absolutely indifferent as to whether or not the Prince and Princess liked his way of speaking. I was at my wits' end. I didn't know at first what to do. Then one morning—the Prince and Princess were arriving the following day, and the Shah the week after—as by a special intervention of Providence, I unexpectedly came across Augustus Lumley in the Champs Elysées. He had arrived only the night before from London, and was, when I met him, on his way to see me. I told him at Voisins, where I dragged him off to breakfast, of the

impending storm, and pointed out that it might be a real kindness in the circumstances to have a strychnine cocktail privately conveyed to Cowell. But the great Augustus dispelled the clouds at once with his nimble wit and that good-natured smile all his friends will remember. "Why I'm astonished, my dear——," he exclaimed, calling me by my Christian name, "that you don't see your way out of this! And you call yourself a diplomatist! Why it's as plain as day, and you are the very man to engineer it!"

"How? I don't see."

"Why, the Prince will always see you at any time, it seems to me. Arrange somehow to be with him when this Persian of yours calls."

"Well, that's easy, but what then?"

"What then?" echoed Augustus. "Why, don't you see what then? Arrange that the interview be very short; that it shall take place when there are lots of people there, and the Prince busy——" Here Augustus slyly and maliciously paused, for he was not averse from teasing his chums. But I was too excited to fence with him and surrendered at once.

"Well, what then?"

Then with a triumphant grin he gave the secret away. "Why, you booby, don't you see? Let nothing but French be spoken during the interview—not a word of English. You can manage that, can't you?"

Oh, how splendid! Of course I could! What a

discovery! What an obvious way of salvation! Cowell need no longer fear the twitching and nervous finger-locking and unlocking of the little hands with which Queen Victoria always accompanied a scolding. It went off splendidly, there was no hitch: triumph and success from start to finish. I coached the Persian: told him just what to do, and warned him that although he might not fear the Prince of Wales, or even the Queen of England, his father would of course hear of anything remiss and punish him; and this so frightened poor little Rahim that he promised to do just what I told him—namely to speak to the Prince only in French, a language the young Persian spoke fluently and correctly. Everything was timed to a nicety; the room was crowded; the Princess was out driving with Mme. Standish; everyone was gabbling French when Rahim entered (by pre-arrangement, unannounced, for the Persian Envoy was there) and I had the audacity to lead him up to the Prince myself and present him in French: "Voici, Monseigneur, le jeune Persan dont vous avez entendu parler, et à qui vous avez eu l'extrême bonté de vouloir bien permettre de venir vous présenter ses hommages." "Ah, oui!" exclaimed the Prince, rather surprised at my behaviour but evidently not remembering anything about Rahim; and, before anything more could be said, the Oriental, who was not such a fool as he looked, bowed low and began mumbling French so rapidly that it sounded like a monk reciting his prayers; then suddenly he bowed

his way back, just as the Duc de Rivière came up. This also was engineered by me, for I knew the Duke was at that time President of the most exclusive club in Paris—the Cercle de l'Union—and that the Prince wanted very particularly to see him about the election of a friend there. So there was no "I'll 'ave yer 'at," etc.; and thus, although I played a trick on my future Sovereign, I certainly averted disaster overtaking the negligent Cowell. What eventually became of Rahim I never knew. He went back to Persia with his father; and although he promised—chanting eternal gratitude and swinging my arm up and down—that he would write to me, he never did so. When the Shah returned once again to Europe Rahim was not with him, and when I asked the Persian Envoy for news, he simply sighed and shook his head. I was told (and quite believe it) that his Imperial father had had him killed, possibly for breaking out into "And now we shan't be long," at some very sacred ceremony of the Shiah religion.

The Shah was an absolute savage, and there were many funny stories about him in connection with his different visits to Europe. For example, Mrs. Ronalds told me that to her certain knowledge the mother of the ex-Kaiser had written to her sister Princess Louise advising her to wear an old dress whenever she was to meet the Persian Monarch at dinner, for he had the habit of throwing under the table any food he did not care for, and especially

bones. If H.R.H. reads these lines she may remember whether this is true or not.

Personally I was never honoured by being presented to the bloodthirsty tyrant; but I came once very near being so blessed. He wanted to see a prize fight, and everything was arranged for such a performance—of course, quite in private. I was going with the late Lord Downe (Jane), but the Queen got to know of the combat and expressed her displeasure (it was to have taken place on a Sunday morning!) and it fell through.

Speaking of the late Lord Downe reminds me that the last time I saw Lord Esme Gordon ("Teapot" Gordon) was in his company. "Teapot," who had no money, married a Miss Phippen Brown, who brought him a fortune and the greatest happiness. I saw a good deal of him at one time in London, for he was, although much younger, a friend of Bob Bristowe. "Teapot," though by no means a student, was anything but a fool, and there used to be a funny story told of how, when a facetious and patronising examiner at Oxford sarcastically remarked, "I wonder if you ever heard of a man named William Shakespeare?" "Teapot" said nothing; but glared. Thus encouraged, the flippant tormentor continued, "But even if by chance this writer should not have wholly escaped the honour of your attention, I feel certain—in fact I'm ready to bet—you can't quote one line from any one of his plays."

Here "Teapot" sprang on him at once; and, his

handsome eyes flashing and his short upper lip curling, quoted in that peculiar high-pitched voice of his family:—

> "The devil damn thee black, thou cream-faced loon:
> Where gott'st thou that goose look?"

Esme was the most excitable youth, and I remember when he announced to me his engagement—it was in Bond Street, and I was just coming out of Long's Hotel, where I was staying—his face wore such an agonised expression that I thought something awful had happened to him. When he told me the cause of his pent-up emotion, I made him laugh by telling him the yarn of how when Lord Derby, uncle of the present peer and eldest son of "the Rupert of Debate," suddenly appeared at Knowsley, when he'd been offered office on the Liberal side, his father exclaimed, "Good God, Stanley, what's the matter? Are you going to be married, or has Dizzy cut his throat?"

Reverting to Sovereigns who were savages, brings me naturally to think of the very uncivilised and unpleasing Milan of Servia. I have narrated in *Uncensored Recollections* how old Mme. Lacroix succeeded, after many rebuffs, in marrying him to the daughter of a rich cavalry officer related to the Stourdzas. Milan quarrelled with his wife (Queen Nathalie), abdicated in favour of his son, who was afterwards murdered with his wife, and came back to Paris. When he had been in the French capital

before, as an unmarried man, he had more or less been apparently civilised—on his best behaviour, as it were; but when he returned, after his abdication and quarrel with his son, he had nothing more to lose or to gain, and had not a little money to throw away. So he boldly revealed himself to be what in truth he always had been, namely an absolute savage. I have written elsewhere of his rough voice and uncouth manners when dining with Jim Bennett and myself at the Café Anglais; but that was when he was on his best behaviour. So what he was, when he returned to Paris with money and had no longer any reason to pretend to be civilised, can be well imagined. Here is one example among many. He gave a dinner at Bignon's: invited me (with many others), and like a fool I went. Everything was exceedingly good and admirably cooked; but the ex-King thought it the correct thing to find fault with every dish, actually spat in his soup, got madly drunk, used the vilest language, and finally threw the whole contents of some dish into the face of the unhappy waiter who was serving him! After that I got away as soon as I possibly could. A fortnight later he got into the hands of the police in the most comic way. I have written elsewhere about the fashion, at one time very popular among members of society, of paying visits to the underworld. This really began towards the end of the Second Empire. Mme. de Persigny and members of her special *coterie* would often go to the Château de Fleurs and chum up with the *cocodettes;*

and the remarks and anecdotes of Mme. de Metternich were frequently so Rabelaisian that on one occasion the Emperor said to her with a grave smile: "Après cette histoire, Princesse, je crois que vous pouvez tout nous dire." This fashion continued long after the fall of the Second Empire; so when Milan returned to Paris after his abdication he thought he too would like to pay a visit to the haunts of the habitual law-breakers—of those who find ordinary morality and even decency far too irksome *impedimenta* to be carried in life's brief journey. The ex-King chose for his companion a well-known, very pretty, and very clever *demi-mondaine*—Fanny Signoret by name, and decided that a visit to a well-known haunt of outlaws of both sexes—the "Clair de Lune" in the Rue des Martyrs where after midnight the *"souteneurs"* and the *"Pierreuses"* used to meet —would interest him most. So without the protection of a plain clothes police official, the dainty Fanny and the very rough and savage ex-Sovereign visited this delectable place one night about half-past twelve. Of course, it was necessary to chum up with the *habitués* of the drinking den, and very soon Milan and Fanny found themselves treating a number of persons of both sexes to *saladiers* of all kinds of intoxicating liquids. When the reckoning came, Milan found to his dismay that he had no small change, although his pockets were full of banknotes which he, for obvious reasons, was unwilling to bring out in such very mixed society. So Fanny paid;

more drinks all round were called for, and this time Milan got very drunk. When the reckoning came again, Fanny was about to pay once more, when a *"souteneur"* (*Anglice,* "ponce") stopped her, and said in a tone of censure to Milan—"Oh, no! no! You mustn't let the same girl pay twice; that's not right!" Then calling to his own *chère amie* who stood near: "Dis donc, ma petite Emma. It's your turn to pay now!" Milan, mad with the kirsch and cheap brandy he had been absorbing, spat in the man's face, and there was a free fight at once, Milan being dragged off to the police station to account for all the banknotes in his pocket. This little adventure was kept out of the newspapers, but was the talk of the clubs at the time. The poor savage spent all his money in a very short time, and finally faded away—far poorer even than another sovereign, the great Béarnais, Henri IV., who wrote to Sully, "I should like to come and see you, but I can't, because my wife has got my *coche.*"

CHAPTER XVII

In regard to men servants, I have always made it a rule to have Englishmen when living in Paris, and Frenchmen when living in England. Of course, this specially applies to footmen and valets; for so far as men connected with horses are concerned, they must always be English, no matter where you're living.

A groom of mine (I won't mention his name, but he and his brother—I engaged them both together, one as coachman—were the sons of a well-known saddle and harness maker not a thousand miles from Trafalgar Square) was a very smart young man; and, as he sat by the side of his brother on the box, attracted the attention of not a few *demi-mondaines,* who sent him love letters. He brought them to me and asked my advice (I have always instructed my servants, male and female, to come to me at once if in any kind of difficulty or perplexity). Among the letters, I saw one from a retired ballet dancer, a woman old enough to be the lad's mother, but well known to be very rich. I told the youngster how rich the woman was; informed him that ladies in mellow maturity are not unfrequently willing to give all to obtain the object desired; warned him to decline resolutely any proposition other than matrimony,

and sent him about his business with my benediction. He followed my advice; the woman married him, and ere long he too came driving in the Bois, lying back in his victoria behind a fine pair of horses, winking to his brother as he passed us. He was a lucky youngster in every way, for I believe he won a lot of money a few years later at the Casino at Deauville.

Speaking of Deauville, any amount of nonsense has been written in the papers about that ugly but very amusing seaside resort. To say that Deauville was "discovered" by Dumas fils is, of course, pure rubbish, and absolutely untrue. I very much doubt if Dumas fils ever went near the place. His seaside resort was Dieppe, where (at Puys) he had a villa not far from the Villa Cecil belonging to the late Lord Salisbury. Alphonse Karr (the author of that clever reply to the question: "Aren't you in favour of the abolition of capital punishment?" "Most assuredly I am, but let MM. les Assassins begin!") "discovered" and made Etretat; but nobody ever "discovered" Deauville. Deauville was the creation of Sir Joseph Olliffe, the Duc de Morny, and Anatole Demidoff. The idea of founding a *Versailles-sur-Mer,* as it were, or rather a seaside Tuileries by the side of the ever-popular Trouville, is said to have originated with Benazet, who was running the gaming tables at Baden-Baden in those days. Fould, the banker, took the matter up; the project was submitted by the Duc de Morny to his brother the

Emperor, and it was pointed out to his Majesty that if properly handled and given the immediate and open support of the Imperial Court, the scheme could not fail to be a great success, both financial and social. The Empress, as if she had some mysterious intimation in her heart of the sad part this sand-bank—for it was then nothing else—would play later in her life, never approved of the scheme, and tried her best to dissuade the Emperor from supporting it. But the influence of Morny and the others was too great; and the Sovereign gave his formal consent that it should be made known to investors that the new seaside resort, adjacent to Trouville, which was about to be founded, would be the special country quarters every year for a few weeks of the Imperial Court. The place was for the most part a barren waste of sand; but when Morny informed his colleagues that he had obtained the Emperor's patronage, and before it became generally known, those wastes of sand were bought for a mere song by the men I have named, who then sat tight and waited for the rush of speculators and builders which they knew would surely come. And it did come with a vengeance. It was said that Olliffe sold for an enormous sum a few acres of sand there which he had bought for £200. If he had contented himself with this enormous gain all might have been well; but he invested this money in still more acres of sand in the same place; and as the scheme, month by month, seemed to become more and more an assured source

of wealth, he invested the greater part of his fortune in it. Then with Morny's death the crash came. From the death of Morny the Second Empire entered on its downward path which ended at Sedan; and from the date of Morny's death the project of transforming the sandbanks known as Deauville into a brilliant seaside resort began suddenly to droop and languish until at last it died out almost altogether. Sir Joseph Olliffe, realising that he was ruined, imitated Tresham in *A Blot on the 'Scutcheon*. He had, if I remember rightly, but three children—two daughters and a son. One of the ladies married the late Sir Frank Lascelles, our popular and most able Minister in Berlin, and the only son, Tommy, was knocked down and killed by a cab in Sloane Street, just as he was supposed to be on the eve of making his fortune under the auspices of the famous sportsman, Mr. Lefevre of Chamant (my neighbour at Chantilly), well known on the English Turf as M. Lombard. The other promoters of the Deauville scheme were rich enough not to feel to any great extent the collapse of the splendid Deauville project. The Palace there for the Emperor, the special quarters for the Jockey Club, the splendid theatre, the magnificent hotels, were never built, it is true; but there was still a Casino, two first-class hotels, and not a few villas, and, above all, the racecourse. Of late years it has by degrees been reviving, and is now for a short time every summer a very lively and amusing place; but it will never, of course, become

what it was originally intended that it should be. Old Anatole Demidoff (his tongue hung out of his mouth, as I have already mentioned elsewhere, and my friend, the late Duke of Hamilton, one day when very angry with him told him he ought to have a bell tied to it to warn people he was coming!) left to his nephew Paul, with the rest of his property, the curious parti-coloured villa still at Deauville which never fails to excite the curiosity of foreign visitors there.

It was from the Hôtel du Casino at Deauville that the Empress Eugénie escaped to England in Sir John Burgoyne's yacht. She arrived at the hotel closely veiled and bent like an old woman, accompanied by Dr. Evans, the American dentist. One of her chamberlains, de Gardonne, who pretended to be there quite by accident, asked Mrs. Elisha Riggs, who with others was taking tea that afternon on the yacht, which was due to sail the following morning, to ask Sir John if he would be kind enough to carry safely to England the jewels of "une très grande dame." The request was made (everybody suspected the real facts of the case), and Sir John replied: "Yes, very gladly, and tell M. de Gardonne that I will not only take charge of the jewels but of the lady herself, if she will entrust herself to my care." That night, at midnight, the Empress went on board; and the following morning the yacht was lying opposite the hotel (the direct crossing of the Channel was delayed by the storm which wrecked the "Captain" and

drowned "Briggs" Gordon, one of Lord Huntly's brothers), and flying the Union Jack, which protected all on board. "So we were right; that old lady, whom nobody was ever allowed to see, was the Empress after all!" exclaimed pretty and charming Jennie Jerome, afterwards Lady Randolph Churchill.

Lewis Gordon—"Briggs"—was one of the nicest of the Gordon brothers, but his language was of a specially pungent quality of Billingsgate mixed in Hades, and when uttered in the high-pitched voice of the Huntly family those verbal gems shone with special lustre, all the more so as they issued from so handsome a lad's lips. Charley Buller was asked one night at Pratt's which of the two used the worst language—Briggs Gordon, or "Matt" Pryor. Charley said in his dainty lisping voice: "Oh, Briggs, of course; but then of course it's not offensive, only funny, coming from him; because, you see, Briggs is a gentleman; whereas, of course, Matt"—here everyone laughed, and, turning, Charley saw "Matt" standing behind him! There was no altercation; Charley cleverly explained what he'd meant and "Matt" had to be satisfied. Charley's fists were well known.

Speaking of Mrs. Elisha Riggs, one of the *habitués* of her salon in the Avenue de Roi was an old English painter named Edward May. He had not much talent; had studied under Couture and acquired the stiff, cold style of his master. Though an English-

man, and although he had never been to America, he went only into American Society in Paris, and was quite unknown at our Embassy. Personally the man was insignificant, but I met in his studio a rather extraordinary man whose portrait he was painting—Singer of sewing-machine fame.

I knew Singer by sight long before I made his acquaintance in old May's studio. He used to drive in the Bois (in the Empire days when it was the fashion to drive round the Lake) in an immense vehicle with a dressing-room and lavatory at the back; in fact, he and the very old Duke of Brunswick in his glass coach and spun glass wig were two of the most curious *habitués* of the Bois in those far-off days. Years later when I met him at May's studio, I got to know him rather well, and saw him in London during the Franco-Prussian War, and also at his place in Devonshire. At one time he took it into his head to dress in red from head to foot—even his boots being bright crimson. One of his strange fancies was to keep all the windows closed; and the effect of being in a dining-room on a July day with all the windows closed and sitting opposite an old man dressed entirely in red was, to say the least of it, peculiar. He was certainly very eccentric. For example, not long after I had made his acquaintance, while lunching with him, he drew a diamond ring from his finger and asked me what I thought of it (knowing that I knew not a little about precious stones), and on my telling him what I

thought, begged me to accept it, an offer which I need hardly say I declined with thanks. When old Singer was in London on one occasion, one of his daughters expressed a great liking for the town. "Would you like to live here?" asked her father; and, on her replying in the affirmative, he told her she could have her wish. So they started house hunting; and, when the desired residence had been found, began furnishing it, the father denying nothing and lavishing thousands. It was arranged that it should be all ready for her birthday; and, when that anniversary arrived, her father took her to the splendidly furnished house, showed her all over it, and gave her the key, saying, "Take this: the house is yours!" Then as the lady flung herself into his arms and kissed him in a rapture of loving gratitude, he added: "But you shall never live in it. I'm sending you back to Paris to-night!" It had all been done out of a desire to trick and disappoint her, and show his disapproval of her daring to have an opinion of her own about a place of residence. Old May told me this story; he had it from both father and daughter. When Singer died, his very charming and popular widow married a man she had loved in the old days—a poor violinist who played in the orchestra at the Théâtre de Batignolles, and bought for him from the Pope the title of Duke of Camposalice. He was a very agreeable man, absolutely unassuming and a good musician. He composed a cantata which was performed without much success

at the Trocadéro in Paris. When he died, his widow married the popular Paul Schege. She was ever a most charming lady, and one of the few instances of a rise to affluence failing to spoil; for true it is that

> "Satan, now wiser than he was of yore,
> Tempts men by making rich, not making poor."

Paris has, of course, always been, and probably will be, not only the rendezvous and meeting place of all the greatest scoundrels of both hemispheres, but, moreover, in nine cases out of ten, the place wherein—provided, of course, they escape the scaffold and have made crime a financial success—they eventually settle down to enjoy their ill-gotten fortune; and I suppose that without doubt the Café de la Paix has received more successful villains within its portals than any other similar establishment in the world— not even excepting the American Bar at the Criterion of forty years ago. One of the most constant *habitués* of the Café de la Paix, and one to whom René the well-known head waiter there was always particularly attentive, was a dignified, venerable looking old gentleman who, with his prominent nose and long snow-white whiskers, looked like Lord Dundreary grown old. He was so quiet and dignified that many people took him for a retired diplomatist. He was always alone: would come in at about eleven in the evening by the entrance in the Place de l'Opéra, always sit in the same seat by the

door: have a Bavaroise au Chocolat: read the evening papers and then quietly go home—he lived quite near, in the Place Vendôme. Now this old gentleman had committed scores of murders, and was one of the most famous brigands of the last century. He was Schiavone, the notorious Neapolitan bandit. When King Bomba put a price on his head, he fled to South America for safety. In one of the Republics there was, as usual, a revolution going on; a President had been put to flight, and a usurper had taken his place as head of the State. The brigand (naturally reckless, for he knew that, apart from the possibility of extradition, no one who killed him would be punished, nay, would rather be rewarded) went to the ousted President and said, "I know how to lead men, and I promise you I will bring you back to your capital. What will you give me if I do?"

"What do you want?"

Schiavone pointed to a little island famous for its richness in canary guano. "Will you sign a covenant to give me this island if I restore you to power in three days?" The bargain was struck. Schiavone restored his man to power; got the island, and thereby became a millionaire. He stayed some time in South America, frightened to return; then a big money payment was made to the Neapolitan Government by his agent in Paris, Isidore Lipmann, the death sentence was annulled, and Schiavone returned to Europe and settled down in Paris as a most re-

spectable citizen under the name of Arnaud de Rivière. I know all this to be absolutely true, for I had it direct from Count Sforza, whose father had been instrumental in getting a price put on this murderer's head—in fact most people knew Arnaud de Rivière was the famous Schiavone, although few knew the story of how he got his large fortune.

One night rather a funny thing happened. I had been with the Prince of Wales and Charley Beresford in the Foyer de la Danse at the Opéra; and, leaving the Prince there, Beresford and I went to the Café de la Paix. There in his corner sat the old retired assassin. I told Beresford the story; but he would not believe it until René, the head waiter, corroborated it. Then going out Charley did the most mad thing. As he and I passed where the old man sat quietly reading, Beresford bent down and whispered the word "Schiavone!" and then passed quickly out into the night. I followed him, but saw the awful effect of that name on M. Arnaud de Rivière. The old man looked up with terror in his face, grasped the table, and half rose. The following evening when I went in again—but this time alone—René asked me what my friend had said to the old gentleman who was so upset that he had called for a *fine champagne* to restore his equanimity. I told Beresford that, if he had stayed, the ex-brigand would probably have slain him. Of course, I said it in jest; yet after all it might have happened. Schiavone had taken so many lives in his time that

there was no reason why he should not add the scalp of the mad young Irish sailor to his other trophies. We too, in London, had a curious example of a retired criminal known as the King of the Cracksmen. He broke into the Boylston Street Bank, of Boston, U.S.A., and took away an enormous sum with him. By some flaw in the Extradition Treaty, he was safe so long as he stayed away from America; so he came to London, took all the first floor over Fortnum & Mason in Piccadilly, and lived like a fighting cock, entertaining a great number of sporting men, from touts to peers. I never spoke to this little man myself; but I knew him well by sight, and a certain well-known peer was a very great friend of his. It is said that he got at the strong room of the bank in Boston by hiring a house next door but one and burrowing under the intervening house. One day, as if tired of inaction, he stole the famous Gainsborough Duchess. The noble lord I have referred to assured me that his friend did this purely and simply for a wager, inasmuch as he was too clever a man not to recognise how next to impossible it would be to dispose of so well known a canvas. But there was a comic incident connected with this which is but little known. The man had a yacht, and on the deck of that yacht there was a seat the lower part of which was a box. The King of the Cracksmen, as he told the peer to whom I refer, simply cut the Gainsborough out of the frame with his penknife, rolled it up, and carried it away under his arm to his rooms oppo-

site the Burlington Arcade. *Pas plus difficile que cela!* But, of course, it could not remain there in safety: so he put it in the box under his chair on the yacht; and it remained there for a long time—until, indeed, he sold the yacht to the ex-Kaiser who, one day, on the occasion of a visit to England, expressed great contempt for the British detective force for not finding a thing so easy to trace as the Gainsborough Duchess: he, all the while, seated (though of course he didn't know it) on the very box in which that picture had so long lay hidden. The cracksman was rather fond, it appears, of giving lessons in conduct and propriety, and one day at Auteuil gravely said to Lord Dupplin, "But do you think that a man in your position could do that?" In telling the story, "Duppy" always remarked: "I have never in my life but once been reminded that *noblesse oblige,* and that was by an American burglar on a racecourse on a Sunday in Paris!" The burglar eventually committed a theft in Belgium which got him a long sentence which ruined his eyesight and broke down his health.

CHAPTER XVIII

SOME of my readers who do not possess very intimate and personal experience of life abroad—social, financial, literary, artistic, sporting, political—may be somewhat surprised at the frequent mention in this volume, and in my preceding ones, of different members of the *demi-monde:* but if they have had the experience to which I have alluded, they will certainly not be astonished at my constantly recurring references to these Cyprian Queens, for they will know how the powerful influence of these Paphian priestesses permeates all things on the Continent—except, possibly, things ecclesiastical—*et encore!* It is not by their beauty (they are often ugly) or charm that these ladies guide and govern all things and all men from Boulogne to Siberia (although, of course, not openly) but chiefly by their great intelligence. Cabinets are formed by them. By them Governments are overthrown; the fame and fortune of artists and men of letters made; fauteuils in the French Academy procured; decorations and honours of all kinds obtained; enormous financial operations engineered; great schemes and reforms and innovations in things economic, military or naval launched and nurtured to success by them. This may seem odd (we are not now considering the ethical side of the

matter, but merely stating a fact, no matter how deplorable) to those who have not penetrated beneath the surface of things abroad; but it is nevertheless absolutely true; and the knowledge and careful consideration of this very valuable fact will often transform to success what might otherwise be failure. The late Barney Barnato (really a charming man, no matter what his ignorant and jealous detractors may say) knew this great secret—although indeed it is only a secret to the Pecksniffian-Grundy circles of Albion—and made most admirable use of it. All his big financial business in Paris was in the first instance launched from boudoirs. He did not approach big financial magnates, or political leaders, at their places of business or at their homes. He saw those who exercised the greatest influence over the persons he wanted to make use of: made his terms and left the rest in their fair hands, with the result that Barney's financial success in Paris was immediate and overwhelming. And so it is all through, always has been, and always probably will be. In the days when Emile de Girardin ruled the Parisian Press he always sought and generally took the advice of Esther Guimon (by the way, Dumas *fils* wrote *La Dame aux Camélias* in her little home, in the Rue Chateaubriand, before the gate of which the bright yellow-wheeled brougham of de Girardin was to be seen every day and for many hours each day). Of course, in speaking as I do, I am not referring to the rank and file of the Baroness d'Ange,

but to the leaders—to the most prominent. And let not the guileless untravelled Britisher who may read these lines run away with the idea that personal beauty, physical grace, or voluptuousness of any kind have been the chief causes of this prominence. The class of Aspasias to whom I am alluding is one composed of ladies of very exceptional brain power: women who know the almost unbreakable tyranny of habit, the power of the bond which they by a caprice can break at any moment and which enables them to govern, almost as slaves, men whose wives have little or no influence over them.

The more prudent and far-sighted rarely condescend to marry a lover; well knowing that to become his property instead of letting him continue to be hers often leads to the loss of all power over him: though, of course, there are exceptions to this rule as to all others. But when a powerful and prominent Parisian Phryne marries she takes good care to marry well. She only links her lot legally with a man of wealth and, if possible, social importance; but, above all, a man she can govern. One who blushed to the altar with the invertebrate brother of an ex-King came from a laundry in La Vilette and was a guileless, gushing Gretchen when first I knew her, all smiles and golden curls—a kiss in soapsuds; but, when legally "Royal Highnessed," as pure and cold as a maiden Polar bear. Beauty in such women is really a drawback to their success in governing men, as it diverts attention from intellectual to physical en-

joyment. La Gioja, great as was her success and influence, would have been far more powerful had she been less lovely. The two ladies who honoured Oxford with a passing visit as French ladies of social importance, as I have chronicled in *Things I Shouldn't Tell*, were called (both being Carolines) the two Caros, and neither of them was good-looking. One was famous for having made Daniel Wilson (afterwards a well-known politician, and the ferociously respectable son-in-law of President Grévy) spend so much money on her that his parents made him the unwilling recipient of a *Conseil judiciaire* or, in other words, made him a minor again. The other Caroline was very ugly—resembling indeed the Princess Pauline Metternich and with the same exquisite *sentiment de la toilette* which distinguished that lady—very clever, and very well read; and it is no wonder she fascinated all the Oxford dons. She was rather big and inclined to be stout, and once Hortense Schneider, who never knew how to dress well, said to her, "I've seen a great many *bœufs gras* in my life, but never one so pretty!" To which Caroline replied: "Well, I've never seen a cow so ugly!" An immediate conflict between the ladies was the result, and the late Duke of Hamilton had to separate them and make the peace. But Schneider was not to be defeated, and meeting her enemy long afterwards with a well-known peer, said to him: "How's your *bonne à tout faire*—maid of all work?"

To attempt to chronicle recollections of life in

Paris (not life of pleasure merely, but life in all its social phases) without mentioning a woman like Léonide Leblanc, would be like giving a *résumé* of *Hamlet* leaving out all mention of the gloomy Prince. Even in English sporting circles Léonide exercised no little power, and she could often give tips for English races of the greatest value—as indeed she did once to the late Marquis Talon. Her knowledge of much that was taking place behind the scenes in the horse-racing world of England she obtained from that strange creature Captain Machell, who came to Paris after his terrible scene with Bob Hope-Johnstone at Newmarket, and whom she nursed back to health. One afternoon, after lunch, when the Captain was seated by the fire in his sitting-room at the Rutland Arms the redoubtable Bob came in, locked the door behind him, threw the key out of the window, and said to Machell, "Now we'll see which is the better man—you or I. One of us doesn't leave this room alive!" Then ensued the most ferocious fight, in which poor Machell got the worst of it, and was indeed terribly battered. Hearing the noise, servants broke open the door, thus probably saving the Captain's life, for Bob was a bloodthirsty devil when Bacchanalianly affected.

Bob Hope-Johnstone was a great friend of the late Lord Donegall, and when George Chichester became Lord Belfast, a very funny thing happened. Hope-Johnstone (who, of course, was a gentleman by birth and a clever and well-informed man) knowing that,

some forty years before, a Lord Belfast had been popular in Viennese Society, went on to the Kaiserstadt and came back to Paris with two very distinguished looking Austrian gentlemen who said they could arrange for a large advance to the new Earl. George Chichester, both delighted and surprised, smothered them with mortgages and promissory notes which they accepted with gravity, and said they would place on their return to Vienna. But nothing more was heard of them, and Hope-Johnstone was afterwards told by Kinsky that the two men were well-known Austrian crooks. The bills when due were, I believe, presented to Belfast by some persons not devoid of humour, but it was like Moses calling on the rock for water when he had left his staff in his tent.

With reference to the clever and wayward Léonide Leblanc, I must chronicle a rather amusing incident. There happened to be, just at the time she was smiling simultaneously on the Duc d'Aumale and Georges Clemenceau, a very handsome American lad in Paris with his parents. I will not mention his name, for he is now the respected father of a grown-up family in his native town. Suffice it to say that he belongs to one of the best families of Philadelphia. Now, of course, mere lads—for many obvious reasons—do not as a rule find favour in the eyes of Aspasias; but Léonide was in this respect somewhat abnormal, and by no means inclined at any time to turn a cold shoulder to the sighs of a suitor still fresh from the Sixth Form. At one of my many delightful

visits to her *bibelot*-laden hotel in the Rue de Prony, I had told Léonide of the way in which Mme. de Montijo used to capture any young man she wanted, and doubtless Mlle. Leblanc remembered this, for one bright June morning, just before the Auteuil Steeplechase, as the handsome young Philadelphian was sauntering up the Avenue du Bois, Léonide, eagle-like, swooped down on him from her brougham, caught up Ganymede of the Quaker City, and his hearth and home knew him no more for a fortnight. Luckily his mother was away in the country at the time staying with Mme. de Poilly at Follembray, or she naturally would have been greatly alarmed by the disappearance of her boy: but the artful Léonide knew just how to time things, and the lad was back at his fireside before "Mommer" missed him.

Another *demi-mondaine,* quite out of the common herd of successful and popular Aspasias, was Valtesse. She was ugly but very clever; had most beautiful skin, and was very *élégante.* She was a shrewd and far-sighted lady who by no means despised the sighs of a young genius merely because he had no money to-day, and would never inherit any. While always, of course, retaining a good and comfortable supply of rich old bankers for everyday luxury and splendour (she lived on the most gorgeous scale and inhabited a large house, almost like a palace, on the Place Malesherbes) she would (through her doctor, a very funny old man named Pelletier) keep in touch

with the *Vie de Bohême,* and if she heard of a rising genius, especially among the painters, she would make his acquaintance, see his work, and, if she recognised in it unmistakable signs of future fame, she would listen to his addresses, and in exchange for her hospitality at her palace, would graciously accept from him some of his best artistic creations. In this way the artful and far-sighted Valtesse became possessed of some of the most rare and perfect early efforts of young artists destined to become famous in a few years—Puvis de Chavannes among many others. These paintings were of great value; and Valtesse sold not a few of them to the French and foreign Governments and to dealers and private collectors. Valtesse wrote a book (she really did write it herself, although many people doubted the fact). I forget the title of the volume, but her *nom de plume* was "Isola," and it is really very good, far indeed above the average of novels. Dentu published it.

I remember one strange story that Valtesse told me. She made up her mind to learn English and asked me to find her a tutor; but I couldn't be bothered. So she hunted about, and at last found a poor broken-down, middle-aged man, who had been engaged at some Lycée, but had lost his berth there somehow. I met him, at her request, at her house, and could see he was an educated man, for his English was good, and so Valtesse engaged him, evidently very much to his delight, for the poor chap looked absolutely starving. So far so good: the thing now was for Valtesse

to fix on a time for the daily lesson. Every hour of the day and evening was fully taken up: she had not a moment to spare. What was to be done? Then a brilliant thought occurred to her. She was out on horseback in the Bois very early (as most of her profession usually are, well knowing that early rising and exercise, no matter what time you go to bed the night before, is one of the best and surest preservatives of youth and freshness) and on her return and before her breakfast always had a milk bath. Would he come then? She would be lying in milk up to her chin, and he could sit by the side of her silver bath and explain to her there the rudiments of the language of Shakespeare and Mrs. Henry Wood. The poor man accepted eagerly. So that was agreed on and they started. I can picture to myself this poor, shabby, old Englishman sitting with his grammar in his hand by the side of the silver bath, while Valtesse lay there with nothing but her clever little red head visible above the soft whiteness of the milk, a well-shaped arm perhaps now and then being raised bare to the just visible shoulder, to arrange, perhaps, a wayward curl.

Another prominent *demi-mondaine* whose name I won't mention, as she is still living and is the wife of a foreign nobleman, had been a barmaid in Chancery Lane, and I could always imgine her enormous hands drawing beer for solicitors' clerks and writ servers. She had a handsome face, but was altogether too big. Her great pose was to be extremely prudish. At the

least hint of anything of a character likely to have pleased Rabelais, she would rise (she was quite six feet high) and majestically sweep from the room. Lord Charles Beresford barred her way to the door once when she was indulging in one of these very Mrs. Siddonsy departures, and gave her a long lecture on the gross impropriety of not liking impropriety. A Russian Jew banker having been very generous to her, she married a foreign Marquis and is now, I believe, quite a leader of society in one of the minor continental towns.

The only two Magdalens of any real importance in England were Anonyma, the first wife of Charlie Rivers Wilson, and Laura Bell, who became Mrs. Thistlethwaite. Of course, I knew neither of these ladies in their youth, but, even in their autumn, they were both very charming, and the last named still retained the beautiful shoulders for which in her springtide she had been famous. And these shoulders were useful to her even in her maturity, as I will narrate. I had been lunching at her house in Grosvenor Square, and the atmosphere was one of most intense respectability. It was a hot day in June, and Mrs. Thistlethwaite had on a dress which showed the famous and still beautiful shoulders. She asked me if I thought Sam Lewis would let her have some money to help a friend, and I looked at the historic shoulders and said, "Yes, Mrs. Thistlethwaite, I'm certain he will, if you will only go dressed as you are now." She smiled: understood and took my advice.

Sam saw the shoulders and signed the cheque. He liked to look at beautiful things, even if he could never hope to possess them.

Regarding Anonyma, I have something rather interesting to chronicle. She was the daughter of one of the most unscrupulous Jew usurers in London. Montagu Williams in his memoirs narrates how he, Williams, came to town as a lad in the army, borrowed money from this man (not noticing what was on the document he signed) and was prosecuted for payment within a few hours of having contracted the debt! He also tells us how the usurer many years later was had up at the Old Bailey for fraud; and how he, Williams, took good care that the splendid carriage in which the thief had driven down to the court went back empty; for penal servitude, obtained by the eloquence of the young subaltern of many years before, retained for a long time the swindler who owned the equipage. Montagu Williams does not say that this man was the father of Anonyma; but he was. She must have been very attractive in her heyday, and even in her early autumn when I first met her, she had a strange fascination of her own.

But I have more to narrate about Anonyma. When some time back, in the *Sunday Times,* Mr. T. P. O'Connor asked for particulars concerning a moneylender named Padwick, I thought of writing and giving him some data regarding that person, but it is well I did not, because the inquirer was nearly submerged beneath the torrent of information that

poured in upon him by every post, some true, and some not a little incorrect. I knew Padwick well. He was not by any means a clever man; and, unlike Sam Lewis, made enemies of his clients; whereas the astute and genial cash conjurer of Cork Street was, as I have chronicled in another place, very much liked by many of the pigeons he so thoroughly deprived of their plumage. The conspicuous thing about Padwick was that mendacity winked at you from every crease and wrinkle in his face, while his sleepy, swollen eyes seemed solely lighted by a dim beam of wonder—"Does he swallow what I'm telling him?"—which was really comic. No one except a blind man, quite idiotic, very drunk, at midnight, in an unlighted cellar, could ever have been deceived by Padwick, whose high-pitched, querulous voice always seemed to me, by its very tone of weak peevishness, to indicate despair of ever being taken seriously. The last Marquis of Hastings was one of his clients. Hastings was not a fool; indeed he had more brains (though, of course, less cunning) than Padwick; but he was absolutely devoid of the least sense of the value of money; and when anyone took the trouble to point out to him—as the late Dean Farrar once did in my presence—how badly he had been swindled, he would only smile and say with his funny lisp, "Really? How awful, isn't it?" Of the moral aspect of any kind of Dick Turpinism, poor Hastings never had the most hazy appreciation.

But before I forget it, I must mention how

Anonyma is connected with all this; it was she who introduced Padwick to Harry Hastings. Padwick told me this himself (he sometimes spoke the truth to give his imagination a rest) and I also heard it from Admiral Rous; in fact, it was well known at the time. It was currently reported, generally believed, and very likely true that Padwick arranged Hasting's marriage with Lady Florence Paget, commonly called "The Pocket Venus," although there were scores of far more beautiful girls in Society at that time.

Lady Florence had become engaged to Harry Chaplin, one of the most charming, amiable and unaffected of men, and one of the most popular racehorse owners of the day. Padwick hated Chaplin, who always looked upon him with utter contempt. Lord Hastings, who took no personal interest in anything and who sauntered through a short life as one in a dream, always did what Padwick advised; and so one day when Lady Florence drove up with her *fiancé* to the Oxford Street entrance of Marshall and Snelgrove, and left him in the carriage on the pretext that she would only be a moment, she passed through the shop to the back entrance where Hastings was waiting for her by appointment, and they drove away and got married, leaving Chaplin waiting in Oxford Street. All that is, of course, ancient history and well known.

Lord Hastings, as I say, never took the least interest in anything; he would turn his back to the

course while a race was being run in which he had a vast sum at stake and calmly scan the crowd of spectators through his field-glasses. It was not pose, nor affectation of any kind, but purely and simply because he was not in the least interested in anything or anybody. I shall never forget how amazed I was as a boy to see him standing coolly by the side of our carriage at Longchamps chatting with my mother while the excited mob was yelling out the name of his horse—"Zee Airle!" "Zee Airle!"—as The Earl came romping to the winning post. On that occasion he gave me his blue and gold quilted note case (why, I don't remember) which I have still, but I am sorry to say it has never since contained such fat flimsies as it did when owned by him.

The following is an instance of the easy way in which Padwick made money out of rich and careless "clients." I was walking many years ago in Jermyn Street with the late Sir George Jenkinson when he suddenly exclaimed, "Good God! Here's Padwick! I'm off!" and plunged into a hotel. The reason of this hasty retreat I never knew, and Padwick did not seem to notice it. He had a peculiar look on his face which showed he was pleased—not a smile, not even a grin, but a side upward twist of the lips which all who read these lines and knew him will remember. "You're the very man I want to see," said he.

"How's that? Got some dibs for me?"

"I got this this morning," he said, "half an hour

ago," and he handed me a telegram. It was from Paris—from the Duke of Hamilton—and contained these few words: "Send me at once——," the sum I don't remember, but it was a very large one.

"Well," I said, "what have I got to do with it?"

"His Grace has forgotten to give his address. I know you know it. Please let me have it. I don't want to wire to the Jockey Club."

"Of course not."

So I gave it to him: and then said: "You're sending the brass, I suppose?"

"Oh! of course—by wire now, thanks to you."

"That's rather a stiff order, isn't it? Do you often get them like that?"

"Well yes, very often: but of course not always quite so big."

"Well," I said, "you can buy yourself a new hat out of that, Padwick, can't you?" His swollen eyes stared dimly at me, and the side twist on his lips went up higher. That's how Padwick made his money. When I saw the Duke a few days later in Paris, I told him of the incident and had the cheek to ask him why he went to such a man. He laughed, and shook me by the shoulder in a playful way he had: "Never mind, young 'un," he said. "I can take care of myself. Pad's dear, but useful!"

Nothing could be more ridiculously untrue than the story that Disraeli came to Padwick and asked him to make him an advance of money purely on his prospects of success in life, and that Padwick did so.

It is indeed so grotesque as to be hardly worth contradicting. In the first place, Disraeli was very firmly seated in the saddle long before Padwick began his career of philanthropy—at so much per *anthrōpos;* secondly, Padwick was just the kind of man Disraeli abhorred; thirdly, Padwick knew nothing of politics and cared still less; fourthly, he never advanced a penny unless he was sure of getting back sixpence for it, and fifthly, he disliked Jews—jealous of them, I think, but certainly hostile to them.

I never knew anything positive about the origin of Padwick, but I always heard that his father had been private secretary to that wicked old financier, Worms de Romilly, whose gay flutter through life from the days of Louis Philippe almost to the Franco-Prussian war of 1870 no number of kisses from pretty lips or bottles of rare vintages seemed able to affect, for he lived to nearly a hundred; and, alluding to his son who had just died at the age of sixty, he said to old Baron James de Rothschild—"I always felt sure I should never be able to bring up that poor lad!" It was no doubt from his father that Padwick learnt the art of lending money, for old Worms was one of the group of usurers who sent their rich victims to Clichy and sponging houses by batches, eighty odd year ago, and yet, nevertheless, were received almost on a footing of equality by the leading social magnates and millionaires of the day. He was, for example, the friend of the millionaire Hope in Paris who built the palace 121 Rue St. Dominique (afterwards bought by

Baron Seillière, the father of Princesse de Sagan) and who thought nothing of spending 3000 francs on strawberries at a fête: but who stayed away once for two whole days from the Cercle Agricole—commonly called the Pommes de Terre—because, as he explained to the Comte de Stackelberg on his reappearance, beaming with smiles, he had found an error in an account sent him by his agent. He had gone over it carefully again himself "and, *grâce à Dieu,* I rectified it and got the money back!" "How much was it?" asked Stackelberg, who himself at that time was squandering a fortune on Marie Duplessis. "Two francs," replied Hope joyously.

CHAPTER XIX

ALTHOUGH the Prince of Wales knew personally most of the leading men in the world of art and letters in Paris of his day, and many of the minor luminaries, he had never met some of the most prominent men of earlier generations, and had never found himself in the society of Victor Hugo, some of whose writings he greatly admired and concerning whom he always seemed glad to hear any personal anecdotes and particulars. It was, I confess, more owing to this fact than to any other that I went frequently to the hospitable house of the old poet during the last twelve years of his life. Although most childishly vain, and the author of much that was trash, he was certainly a great man. Of course, when I knew Hugo he was already very old, and his vanity could be far more easily pardoned than that of Tennyson for the simple reason that he was being almost worshipped as a god many years before the latter had even begun to touch his lyre, and had lived in this atmosphere of adoration all his life, even during his years of exile in Guernsey. That he should, when he came back to France on the overthrow of the Second Empire, have mistaken the burlesque flattery of the younger generation of men, who flocked to his little villa in the Avenue which bore his name, for the

sincere incense of the old days of Charles Nodier at the Arsenal can be readily understood and easily forgiven. He was a genius, and not only knew the fact himself, but had been told so unceasingly during the past sixty-odd years. Small wonder then that when first I had the honour of making his acquaintance he had become hopelessly and irrevocably Olympian. But having been perpetually treated as a god for more than half a century before I met him, and having thus become accustomed to be universally acknowledged, he had got to wear his halo easily, not to say jauntily, and would joke and chatter with ordinary mortals with a kind condescension and an assumed simplicity that were very amusing. Of course, from the special angle which he had assumed, he who, seizing the spirit of Corneille's "Cinna"—"Moi seul, et c'est assez!"—had taken as a motto "Ego Hugo," no tongue in cheek of any apparent worshipper could ever possibly be visible. They bowed to him as in duty bound; acquiesced in all he said, which was natural, since he was omniscient and they knew it; and the "*cher maître*" of everyone irrespective of age, rank, or sex seemed, applied to him, as natural as the "Sir" of a schoolboy to his tutor. There were sincere worshippers like myself (for I knew what a genius he was in spite of his mock divinity) but there were others, like that Israelite in whom there was much guile, Alfred Naquet, the author of the famous Divorce Bill, who came to the great Victor's temple to sneer even as they bowed

before the deity. Naquet made unmerciful fun of him, but Hugo never perceived or even suspected it. One night the great Victor asked Naquet, in that Olympian and patronising tone habitual to him and which Barbey d'Aurevilly (himself a most repulsive, although talented, personality; a cheap, shoddy Brummell with the Heliogabalian views of a Cambacerès) described as that of a "jocrisse à Pathmos," "Do you believe in the eternal life of the soul?" The artful Alfred saw his chance and replied with deep humility, his big Hebraic tongue filling his jowl the while, "Of ordinary souls, dear Master, of such souls as ours, I mean, that is indeed hard to believe; but when Nature brings forth a spirit like yours, Master, she must certainly take good care to leave nothing undone to preserve it for ever." "That is a very sensible opinion, very well expressed," said Hugo, "and I'm not sure I don't agree with you."

The great man was always exceedingly pleasant to me, in fact went out of his way to flatter me with his attention, and I have carefully treasured many letters from him, for he never failed, notwithstanding his great age and innumerable duties as a deity, to answer me by return post. I had been introduced to him by Emile de Girardin; and although the fact that I was honoured with the friendship of the Prince of Wales did not appeal to him in the least, the fact that I was also honoured with the friendship of the Duc d'Aumale did appeal to him very greatly; so, knowing his liking for Henri d'Orléans, I took an early oppor-

tunity to tell him how I had not long before heard the Prince recite with tears in his eyes the poet's beautiful lines asking Louis Philippe for pity on Barbes:—

> "Par votre ange envolée, ainsi qu'une colombe,
> Par ce royal enfant, doux et frêle roseau,
> Grâce encore une fois! Grâce au nom de la tombe,
> Grâce au nom du berceau!"

That was sufficient. Hugo took me to his heart at once, and there—greatly to the envy of Swinburne—I reposed until the great man died and his coffin was swung up to dangle clumsily in mid air for some days from the Arc de Triomphe, before being relegated to the Panthéon. To me Hugo's attitude was always one of good-humoured banter, chiefly about my Bonapartist sympathies and friends in the Imperialists' camp. Concerning one of these I have, by the way, in connection with Hugo, a rather funny story to tell. I knew a Bonapartist deputy named Camille Godelle, an absolute nonentity, in fact a very ridiculous man who was constantly, in the most comic way, assuming well-known Napoleonic attitudes about nothing at all, say, for example, folding his arms across his breast in a very Austerlitzy, Marengoified fashion when he met you casually and made a remark about the weather; or clasping both hands behind his back in a Saint Helenaey way when you told him you thought there might be rain. Why Hugo should have selected this harmless clown for his special scorn, I could never understand; but, having seen me

once talking to Godelle in the street, he was for ever after laughingly poking fun at him, and hardly ever greeted me without saying something jocular, of this kind of thing, for example, "Well, and how goes your friend Camille? I don't mean Desmoulins, I mean Godelle"; or, "When are we to expect a new *coup d'état* with your friend Godelle as Emperor? Give me time, *mon enfant,* to get my luggage ready to avoid being shot." One night at his home—I used to drop in about once a fortnight—he chaffed me in the usual way about my empty-headed Deputy friend, and then suddenly paused, and for a moment said nothing, as if waiting for his Muse to come and amuse him. Then he said, with a merry twinkle in his eyes: "I'll give you the portrait of your friend Godelle in verse, more lifelike than anything that Bouguereau could paint. Here it is." Then he recited his recent inspiration:

> "Oh figure ignoble encore plus que sinistre!
> Laid à faire avorter une femme vraiment!
> Quand on te qualifie, et qu'on t'appelle 'cuistre,'
> Cuistre est un ornement!"

Just then, Hugo being called away, I jotted down the delicious doggerel at once, lest I should forget it.

Of Victor Hugo's great contemporary bard in England—Alfred Tennyson—I saw but little, and in so saying I feel no sigh of regret. My thoughts rather fly in sympathy to the witty bar-keeper in Kansas who, when he heard a great German musician

was coming to his town, wrote up on the walls of his saloon:—

> "We want but little, Herr Bülow,
> Nor want that little long,"

for truth to tell a very little of Tennyson the man went a long way—I have known him sit for hours at a time, sullenly smoking his pipe, not only not speaking, but not even condescending to answer a question, until in despair one got to long for some "airy, fairy Lilian" to dance in and untwist the tongue of this hairy, sore-headed bard, for the silly chatter of schoolgirls always delighted him and he would talk for hours with anything of about sixteen wearing a petticoat. I was introduced to him by Lord Eliot ("Rufus," the one made a peer in his own right by Gladstone) and he was kind enough to ask me down to see him in the Isle of Wight, an invitation I was unwise enough to accept, for I was bored to death and found this morose *poseur* far less amusing than either of my two other poet friends—Hugo or Swinburne, which last, by the way, always used to say with a whimsical grin: "I'll allow nobody to abuse Tennyson but myself." Mrs. Cameron, of camera fame, was staying at the poet's house, and a very wearisome lady she was. She photographed everybody and everything, and labelled each picture with the name of a sentiment or with a quotation from one of the poems of her patron. It was astonishing and bewildering to be suddenly confronted in the most unex-

pected way with the sentiment in flesh and blood, the ideal presentment of which, but a few short hours before, you had been called upon to admire in a photograph. So when I met a housemaid in the hall just before breakfast, I almost staggered, for I recognised—without the feather duster of course—"Sympathy": and my feelings can be imagined when I saw that the sad, indeed woebegone-looking boy who had blacked my boots was none other than "Tears, idle tears!" Poor Mrs. Cameron had no sense of humour, and was greatly offended with me when—of course, *not* in the presence of our host—I facetiously suggested she should take a photograph of the well-fed-looking butler and put under it the bard's words slightly altered:—

> "Oh to what uses shall we put
> The wild weed flower that simply blows,
> And is there not a mortal shut
> Within the redness of a nose?"

Tennyson read "Maud" to me. I think he always did so to persons he never wanted as guests again. It was very dreadful: the cawing of the rooks after Maud, as interpreted by the author of their being, was so grotesque, so ridiculous, and at the same time so saddening a symphony in silly self-complacency—not the Olympian superiority and serenity of Hugo, but the complacent satisfaction of a Camberwell grocer who sees you foolishly accept as true his felonious fable about the freshness of his eggs—that I could

have sympathised with the poor rook-racked, Maud-maddened butler if he had taken to drink.

Robert Browning—in my opinion, and in that of many others, the greatest dramatic poet we have had since Shakespeare—I am sorry to say I saw but little of. He was the most simple and unassuming of men, and his society was delightful after that of the Olympian Hugo, the morose yet ever willing-to-caw Tennyson, and the squirming, hand-wringing Swinburne. I first met him at a small dinner party of men given by a German-American lady living in Queen's Gate. The other guests were Cyrus Field, the transatlantic cable pioneer; Junius Morgan, the banker—father of the late Pierpont Morgan, and grandfather of the present popular financier—and Charles Kingsley. I amused Browning very much, I remember, by telling him how I had mystified his son and posed to him as a wizard and thought-reader by telling him his age—getting at it by the easy means of remembering in *Casa Guidi Windows,* the lines:

> "The sun shines through the window, up the floor
> Stand out in it, my own young Florentine
> Not two years old."

These poems were published in 1851. Browning and Kingsley had to leave early, but the two Americans stayed later, and they were kind enough to see me home, stroll back to Long's with me, just for the walk, as it was a lovely night. I remember Junius Morgan telling a very comic yarn about an old

farmer in the early days in Connecticut. He received a bill from some one which puzzled him greatly because of the frequent recurrence of the word "ditto" in it. What on earth could it mean? He called his wife, but she couldn't tell. Evidently it was a mistake, for they both agreed they had never had any ditto. Still there might be something behind it after all, and the astute old New Englander was not going rashly to repudiate ditto without consulting his lawyer first. So he and his wife rode into Bridgeport together—it was long before railways were heard of—to consult the man of law. When they got to his office, the farmer left his wife with the horse and went in alone; and, when he came out, she anxiously asked him: "Well, what did he say? What is ditto?" To which her husband replied with a smile: "Well, it's like this, my dear, I'm a darned fool, and you're ditto!" Junius Morgan swore this was true, that in his boyhood he had known the farmer and his wife, and heard it from them. Cyrus Field told me that, accustomed to ocean travelling as he was, he always suffered agony from sea-sickness, and found a tumbler of champagne with a few drops of chloroform in it the only palliative. He was looking forward with dread to the morrow as he was leaving for the Continent next day, and little did the poor man know the awful experience awaiting him. The weather was so bad that, when the boat reached Calais, it was deemed dangerous to try to enter the harbour; and so it came back. Imagine the horror

of poor Cyrus Field, blissfully ignorant of all this and half asleep in his deck cabin with his champagne and chloroform, when, the boat slowing down, and fondly thinking he had at last reached France, he found himself back in Dover! What a strange career was his! One of three brothers, Cyrus began life as a boy by sweeping out the office of a paper merchant in Park Row, New York, and, about the same time, in far distant Scotland, there was a poor barefoot boy wandering from house to house, drawing (on canvas) figures for ladies to do worsted work on, receiving a few shillings, and then being sent to the kitchen for his food. When Field came to London with his transatlantic cable scheme, everyone at first laughed him to scorn, and two of his earliest supporters were an American furrier from Vermont and the erst barefoot boy from Scotland, the one later on Sir Curtis Lampson, and the other Sir John Pender, in whose hospitable house in Arlington Street I have passed many a pleasant hour.

The next time I met Robert Browning was in Paris, he being *en route* for Italy. I introduced him to Lord Blandford, who gave us a breakfast at Bignons, and who told us a very amusing story about the Mrs. Astor of those days. She was, it appears, a very haughty and stately dame who, in response to a knock on the door, would call out in a very Mrs. Siddonsy tone of voice: "O—penn!"; and on one occasion she expressed her astonishment to Blandford that anybody who was indeed anybody could ever go in those

"odious omnibi"; to which the waggish Blandford sympathetically replied: "Ah, Mrs. Astor, that is indeed one of the conundra of life." After that, I saw Browning off and on a few times in Paris and in London, but never, I regret to say, for long: and the last time I saw him was in Paris. I invited François Coppée (I had taken Browning to see Coppée in the Rue Oudinot) and Guy de Maupassant to meet him at breakfast at Foyod's, but he got a telegram compelling him to leave Paris at once, and so "Le Passant" and "Boule de Suif" and I had to eat without "Sordello." I remember while we were at table that morning (I had not thought it necessary to engage a *cabinet particulier*) a very terrible newspaper man named Montaigut coming up to us in quest of "copy" and how we all three told him the most ridiculous yarns which duly appeared in the *Gil Blas*. This man was the terror of everyone who was the least *en evidence* for the moment, for he was the King of "*Crampons*" and would not let you go until you had emitted "copy" for him. When he died, and Armand Silvestre was asked in my presence if he were going to the funeral, I could not help smiling as I recalled a story of what Mr. Ewarts the American wit and statesman had said when asked if he were going to the funeral of a man he particularly disliked: "No; I not going, but I thoroughly approve of it!"

Another poet whom I knew, and knew very intimately, was the late Lord Lytton—Owen Meredith.

Nothing Olympian here; no cawing of his own rhymes—simply a well bred English gentleman, full of heart and full of talent, if not of absolute genius, and utterly devoid of affectation. I have rarely met a more charming man; and his friend Julian Fane was almost equally delightful. Fane adored his mother, Lady Westmorland, and used to write verses to her every year—on the occasion of her birthday or his, if I am not mistaken. I remember two lines of such a poem written after he had been seriously ill:

"Oh, Mother, I clasped Death, but seeing thy face
Leapt from his dark arms to thy dear embrace."

I may be wrong—for of course I quote from memory—but I think I give these lovely lines correctly. Robert Lytton, like his friend, was a man of deep affection, and the death of a dearly beloved sister was a blow from which he took a very long time to recover. I knew him from my infancy, and can see him now, a handsome young fellow looking like a Spaniard, coming to my nursery to pay his respects to my baby-love for him. When I grew up, it used to amuse me to imitate his verses—try to write in the same style, I mean—and many a sheet of foolscap have I sent for his criticism to No. 2 Avenue Bosquet. His criticism was invariably kind and sometimes encouraging, even in the case of some inferior verses I wrote and entitled "What was Said in the Boudoir." Most of my readers will remember Owen Meredith's verses beginning:

"At Paris it was, at the Opera there"

and describing how a man who has married for money sees as in a vision the woman whom he had really loved, the poem ending with the familiar verses:

"The world is fill'd with folly and sin,
And love must cling where it can, I say:
For Beauty is easy enough to win;
But one isn't loved every day.

"And I think, in the lives of most women and men,
There's a moment when all would go smooth and even,
If only the dead could find out when
To come back, and be forgiven."

Well, the verses I wrote and called "What was Said in the Boudoir" were inspired by the above, and told how a woman who has married for money and rank meets at a ball the lover of her youth—the only man she ever loved. On coming home, she tells in her boudoir, to a sympathetic friend, the story of the mistake she made and of the recent meeting. It was written many years ago, and I never kept a copy; but I remember it, and now give, haphazard, three verses from this little poem which Owen Meredith in his kindness praised:—

"Does he think that a coronet mends a heart,
Or a wedding ring seals up all the past?
Does he think that the *woman* can easily part
With all that the *girl* clung to, so fast?

"Good night, if I stay I shall sob out my heart
In your arms. We are better than men any day.
Though we suffer the most, we have chosen the part
That is good and can never be taken away.

"For a man may love, and forget and forgive
And love again if he cares to endeavour;
But a woman gives all that one heart can give
To another: she loves but once and for ever!"

Lord Dudley's comment when I read these verses to him and showed him Owen Meredith's letter of praise, was characteristic: "Very pretty, very pretty, but, of course, a damned lie!"

The Duke of Edinburgh told me of an old labourer, on the estate at Eastwell, named Plant, who could neither read nor write, but who, according to tradition, was a Plantagenet, the direct descendant of an illegitimate son of Richard III who was very fond of him and is said to have come to see him on the eve of the battle of Bosworth to assure him of his love and that he had been provided for in the event of things going wrong. I told this to Victor Hugo who was greatly interested, and he said that the peasantry of France was packed with direct and legitimate descendants of noble families who had suffered during the Terror. This fact I knew already, and indeed had it brought to my notice when, many years later, I went to the inn at Viarmes (a village near my racing establishment at Chantilly) to see my friend the landlord who had two cart-horses to sell me. An old woman was at the door when I rode up; she was selling cabbages, and although almost in rags, seemed happy enough as she joked with the servant who paid her. When she had trudged off, the innkeeper said to me: "That old woman is a Mademoiselle de la

Rocheguyon," the grand-daughter of a lady who was guillotined during the Terror and who belonged to a junior branch of that great family.

Truth is indeed stranger than fiction; and it is a well-known fact that many of the most popular works of fiction have been really chronicles of what has actually taken place. An instance of this is the case of *East Lynne,* one of the most popular novels ever written, and, as a play, acted in most civilised countries. *East Lynne* is simply the true story of Lady Augusta Fane, one of the most beautiful women of her day, who ran away with Sir Arthur Paget from her husband, Lord Morley. She left her little baby, but came back ten years later as a nurse, when the child, Lord Boringdon, was dying, and took care of him to the end, her broken-hearted husband recognising her, but never letting her know he had done so. These facts my father had from Thackeray who told them to Mrs. Henry Wood who founded *East Lynne* on the story.

I believe this has never before been recorded in print.

INDEX

Ailesbury, Maria, Lady, 47, 142
Aintree Racecourse, 21
Albert, Prince Consort, 20, 24, 158, 159
Albertus Magnus (magician), 150
Alcester, Lord. *See* Seymour, Admiral Sir Beauchamp
Alexander II (of Russia), 25, 36
Alexandra, Queen, 188
Alexandre, Estelle (a music-hall actress), 189
Alfonso XII, King (father of Alfonso XIII of Spain), 40
Andrieux (a musician), 180, 181
Angerstein (grandson of the National Gallery Angerstein), 141
Anglesey, Lord (1st Marquis), 100
Anonyma (a Magdalen), the first wife of Sir Charles Rivers Wilson, 259-262
Aosta, Duchess of, 45
—— Duke of, 45
Appleton, Tom (the Sidney Smith of America), 16, 137
Arem, Paul, 77
Arnold, Matthew, 135
Ashbury, Jimmy, 48
Astor, Mrs., 276
Austria, Elizabeth Empress of, 54
Auteuil Racecourse, 249
Autun, the ex-Bishop of, 113, 200

Bacciochi, Count (Imperial Chamberlain), 100, 101
Baden-Baden, 87, 238
Baker, Colonel Valentine, 14
Ballantine, Serjeant, 27
Balzac, 170
Barnato, Barney, 251
Barry, Mme. du, 168, 169
Bassano, Duchesse de, 48
Bathurst, Lord, 193
Bazaine, Marshal, 34
Béarn, Count de, 124-129
Beauclerk, Aubrey de Vere, 63
Beaufort, the 8th Duke of, 129
Beauregard, Comtesse de. *See* Howard, Miss
Beauvoir, Marquis de, 38
Bêchevet, Comte de, 62

Beecher, Henry Ward, 95, 137
Bell, Laura (a Magdalen), who became Mrs. Thistlethwaite, 259
Benazet, 238
Bennett, James Gordon, 234
Benson, Edward White, Dr. (Archbishop of Canterbury), 27, 28
Bentinck, Mrs. George Cavendish (*neé* Livingstone, of U.S.A.), 60
Beresford, Lord Charles, 26, 247, 259
—— Lord Marcus, 22, 152, 169
Bernard, Samuel (Jew banker), 166
Bernhardt, Sarah, 173
Berry, Duc de, 113, 137, 169
Berthier, Countess Paul, 33
Beyens, Baron de, 103
Bignon's, 140, 234
Bird, Reginald, 168
Bismarck, Count (afterward Prince von), 45, 73
—— Herbert, 29, 204
Blackie, Professor John Stuart, 204
Blandford, Lord, 276
"Bomba," King, 246
Bonar, Mr. (partner of Mr. Angerstein), 48
Booth, John Wilkes (assassin), 215
Boringdon, Lord. See *East Lynne*
Boucicault, Dion (actor), 132
—— Mrs. Dion, 132
Boucicaut, Aristide, 70
Bouffé (manager of the Old Vaudeville), 144
Boulanger, Father le, 58
—— General, 67
Bourbon, House of, 40
Bowood, 29
Brampton, Lord. *See* Hawkins, Sir Henry
Brasseur (the French tutor to Edward VII when Prince of Wales), 45
Bristed, Mrs. Charles Astor, 96
Bristowe, Bob, 119, 120, 232
Broglie, Mme. de, 93
—— Prince Robert de, 189
Broissia, Mme. de, 127
Brooks, Preston (a Southerner and slave owner), 65
Browning, Robert, 274
Brownlow, Father, 184
Bruce, Robert, General, 22, 23
Brunet, Baron, 43, 164
Brunnow, Baron (Russian Ambassador), 161
—— Mme. la Baronne, 161
Brunswick, the wicked old Duke of, 52, 53
Brussels, 144, 170, 209
Buller, Charley (Charles Francis Buller), 242
Bulwer, Henry (afterwards Lord Dalling), 96
Bure (an illegitimate son of Napoleon III), 48, 216

Burgoyne, Sir John, 241
Burnham, Lord, 68
Burns, Walter, 60

Café Anglais, 234
Calais, 275
Calzado, Torridio (impressario), 87
Cambridge, 23, 62
—— Duke of, 15
—— House, 93
Cambronne, General Pierre, the language of, 26
Camden Place, Chistlehurst, 48
Cameron, Mrs. (photographer), 272, 273
Campbell, Lord, 206
Camposalice, Duke of (a poor violinist), 244
Canler, 65, 128
Cannes, 21
Canrobert, Marshal, 49
Capucines, Théâtre des, 188
Cardigan, Lord (his opinion of Tennyson's "Charge of the Light Brigade"), 70, 71, 194
Carnot, President, 41
Cassagnac, Paul de (journalist), 123
Castiglione, Comtesse de, 163
Caros, the two (Caroline Letessier and Caroline Hassé), 253
Catherine II, Empress of Russia, 141, 157
Catholics, Club for, 119
Cercle de l'Union (Parisian Club), 231
Chambord, Comte de, 30, 68, 137
Chamerolles, Lambert de, 168
Champlâtreux, 116
Champs Elysées, 61, 95, 121, 166, 204
Chantilly, 32, 41, 43, 63
Chaplin, Harry (1st Viscount Chaplin), 262
Charcot, Dr., 163
Charette, General Athanase de, 29, 137, 169
Charles X, 53, 211
Chartres, Duc de, 31, 45
—— Duchesse de, 46
Chavannes, Puvis de, 257
Chiltern Hundreds, 109
Chéri, Rose, 145
Chesterfield, Lord, 102
Chichester, George (afterwards Lord Belfast and 5th Marquis of Donegall), 254
Child's Bank, 155
Chopin, Frederick (Polish pianist and composer), 145, 181, 182
Christian IX (of Denmark), 187
Church, Fathers of the, 139
Church Times, 102

Churchill, Lord Randolph, 26
"Clair de Lune" (haunt of outlaws), 235
Claremont, 170
Clarence, Duke of (afterwards William IV), 195
Clarendon, Lord (4th Earl), 196, 198, 199
Cleasby, Sir Anthony, 15
Clemenceau, Georges, 255
Clementine, Princess, 46
Cleveland, Duchess of, 101
Clichy, 265
Clinchamp, Mme. de, 32, 38, 46
Cliquot, Champagne family of, 138
Clivedon, 135
Clonmell, Lord (3rd Earl), 70, 71
Code Napoléon, 112
Coleraine, Lord, 192
Collin, Jacques, 85
Compiègne, 54, 114
Concha, General (created Marquis of Havana), 40
Condé, Prince de (Duc d'Aumale's eldest son), 44
Connaught, H. R. H. the Duke of, 195
Contades, Marquis de, 139, 140
Conti, Prince de, 166
Cooper, Sir Alfred, 149
Coppée, François, 277
Corbett (the man who shot John Wilkes Booth), 216
Cork, Lord, 72
Courlande, Biron de 157
Courval, Mme. de (*née* Ray, of U.S.A.), 99
Cowell, Sir John, 226, 227
Cowley, Lord (1st Earl), 102, 103, 104
Crawford, the late Lord, 226
Cremorne, 102
Croise, Philippe Marquis de, 97
Cross, Lord, 18
Crouch, Frederick W. Nichols, Professor of music, 223
—— Emma. *See* Pearl, Cora
—— Lydia, formerly Pearson, 223
Cumming, Sir William Gordon, 28
Cuzco, Dr., 115

d'Alençon, Duchesse, 46
d'Andlau, Comte, 112, 114, 116, 117
d'Ange, Baroness, 252
Danse, Foyer de la, 80, 247
Darcier, J. L., 77, 78
d'Aumale, Duc (1882-1897), 29, 31, 33, 39, 41, 42, 44, 45, 46, 169, 172, 204, 255, 269
Dawnay, Willie, 150
Deauville, 174, 191, 238

Index

Déjazet, Virginie (famous actress), 68, 143
Demidoff, Anatole, 238, 241
—— Paul, 156, 157. See also *Uncensored Recollections* and *Things I Shouldn't Tell*
Dentu (a publisher), 257
Depew, Chauncey M. (American raconteur), 14
Derby, Edward Lord, 70, 186, 233
Desmoulins, Camille, 271
Deutsch (an American gambler), 123, 124, 126, 132
Devonshire, the late Duke of, 100
—— House, 134
Dietrichstein, Princess, 155, 202
Dilke, Sir Charles, 11
Disraeli, Benjamin (Lord Beaconsfield), 16, 49, 70, 102, 106, 107, 110, 153, 154, 220, 265
Djemal Pasha, 200
Doche, Eugénie (the actress who created the part of La Dame aux Camélias), 142-146
Donegall, Lord (5th Marquis), 254
d'Orléans, Henri. *See* Duc d'Aumale
d'Orvault, Marquis, 53
Downe, Lord ("Jane" of the 2nd Life Guards), 232
Dreux-Brezé, Marquis de, 55
Drouyn de Lhuys, Mme., 199
Dudley, Georgina Countess of, 89
—— Lord (1st Earl), 52, 59, 89, 90, 92-105, 145, 189, 280
Dufferin, Lord (1st Marquis), 25
Dumas fils, 61, 143, 144, 188, 238, 251
Duncombe, Thomas Slingsby (Finsbury Tom), 49-52, 93
Duplessis, Marie, 266
Dupot, Marquis, 12
Dupplin, Lord, 21, 193, 249
Durand's (the restaurant), 123
Dusausoy (the old tailor), 210
d'Uzès, Duc, 138

East Lynne (the true story of Lady Augusta Fane), 281
Edinburgh, Duchess of, 161
—— Duke of, 18, 21, 77, 81, 115, 118, 161, 179, 180, 280
Edward VII, King of England, when Prince of Wales, 7-28, 111, 148 157, 158, 226, 269
Eliot, Lord (afterwards 4th Earl of St. Germans) (Rufus), 272
Ely, Lady (wife of 3rd Marquis of Ely), 18, 159
Essad Pasha, 122, 126
Estancelin, M. (old member of the Orleanist Party), 170
Esterhazy, Prince, 155
Eton, 49
Eugénie, Empress, The, 101, 199, 241
Evans, Dr. (the American Dentist), 241

Fane, Julian, 278
—— Lady Augusta. See *East Lynne*
Fargueil, Anaïs (a quarrelsome actress), 143
Farnborough, 43, 48
Farrar, the late Dean, 261
Faubourg St. Germain, 30, 39
Faure, J. B. (the operatic singer), 77, 85
"Faust," Gounod's opera, 97
Favre, Jules, 54
Fechter, Charles (tragedian), 143, 144
Ferrières, 200
Fezensac, Duchesse de (the "Annie Laurie" duchess), 128
Field, Cyrus, 274
Fiocre, Eugénie (ballerina), 62, 63
Flahaut, Comte de (usually in England spelt Flahault), 29, 47
Fleury, Cuvillier (tutor to Duc d'Aumale), 45
—— Emile Felix, 47, 48, 53, 68, 93, 94
Floors Castle, 22
Follembray, 256
Fontainebleau, 53
Ford, Sir Francis (Ambassador in Madrid), 60
Fould, Achille, 61, 62, 238
Francis I of France, 149
Francis Joseph (of Austria), 156
Franconville, 33, 45
Frederick Charles, Prince (of Prussia), 156
Frederick VII (of Denmark), 187

Gagarine, Prince (protector of Aimée Desclée the actress), 121, 131
Gallifet, General de, 25, 26, 190
—— Mme. de, 98, 209
Garcia (the famous gambler), 87, 88
Gardonne, M. de, 241
Garibaldi, Giuseppe, General, patriot, 135
Garfield, President, 32
Gautier, *rôle* of Marguerite, 143
George IV, 20
George, King of Greece, 81
—— Prince of Denmark, 185, 187
Gioja, La (courtesan), 157, 253
Girardin, Emilé de, 75, 78, 187, 189, 251, 269
Gladstone, W. E., 210
Godelle, Camille, 270
Gordon, Lord Esme ("Teapot" Gordon), 232
—— Lord Lewis ("Briggs"), 242
Gore, Gussie, 186
Gould, Mrs., 199
Gounod, Charles, 84
Gower, Ronald (Lord Ronald Sutherland-Gower), 149
Greeley, Horace, 95

Grente, Vicomte de, 69
Greville, Charles, 193
Grévy, President Jules, 41
Grimston, Robert (Lord Verulam's brother), 193
Grover's Opera House, Washington, 218
Gueronnière, Vicomte de la (Director of *La France*), 61
Guest, Montague, 148
Guilbert, Yvette (music-hall singer), 76
Guimon, Esther ("The Lion"), 187, 189, 251
Guise, Duc de, 44
Guizot, François, 37
Hamilton, Lady (Nelson's), 194
—— Lord Charles (Carlo), 87, 98, 128
—— the 12th Duke of ("Angus"), 89, 241, 253, 264
Hastings, the last Marquis of, 261
Hatchards' (bookshop), 32
Havana, Marquis of. *See* Concha, General
Hawk, Harry (actor), 215
Hawkins, Sir Henry (the judge), 109
Hawthorne, Nathaniel, 196
Hay, John (private secretary to Abraham Lincoln), 212
Hayes, Catherine (called the Swan of Erin), 136
Hénault, President, 167
Henri IV, the great Béarnais, 236
Herbert, Sidney (statue), 17
Hertzog, Curé of the Madeleine, 45
Hibbert, Mr. Washington, 193
Hinchingbrooke, Lord, 148, 151
Hirsch, Baron, 175, 176
Hoffalrig or Court Ball (Austrian), 155
Hohenlohe-Schillingfurst, Prince, 155
Hohenlohe-Schillingfursts (an old Austrian family), 154
Holker, Sir John, 110
Hope (the millionaire of Paris), 265, 266
Hope-Johnstone, Bob, 254
Hortense, Queen, 55
Hostein (manager of the Gaieté), 143
Hôtel Borghese, 222
Hôtel Bristol (Paris), 13, 22, 104, 116, 228
Houghton, Lord, 95
Howard Cardinal, 184
—— Kenneth, 195
—— Miss (created Comtesse de Beauregard by Napoleon III), 61
Hübner, Baron de, 185
Hugo, Mme., 146
—— Victor, 67, 146, 267
Hulse, Sir Edward, 221
Hurel, Abbé, 33, 45

Isabella, Queen of Spain, 40, 88

Isabelle (the bouquetière), 62
Ismail Pasha, 200
"Isola"—*nom de plume* of Valtesse, the *demi-mondaine,* 257

James, G. P. R., 96, 141, 196
—— Henry, 176
Jaucourt, Comte de, 113
Jenkinson, Sir George, 263
Jerome, Jennie, Miss (afterwards Lady Randolph Churchill) 242
Jersey, Lady (of George IV's day), 155
Jockey Club (French), 62, 114, 116, 124, 130
Joinville, Prince de, 30
Jouy, Jules, 80
Jowett, Benjamin (Master of Balliol), 101

Kapnist (Chancellor of the Russian Embassy), 178
Karr, Alphonse, 238
Kayler, 151
Keene, Laura (actress) 215
Kerr, Lord Schomberg, 156
Kinder, Mr., 194
King, Tom (the prize-fighter), 165
Kingsley, Charles, 274
Kinsky, Count, 255

Labruyère (Catherine Schumacher), 53
Lacroix, Mme., 233
Ladas (the Derby winner), 14
Laffitte, Rue, 122, 189
Lamartine, Alphonse, 170
Lambertye, Comtesse, 55
Lampson, Sir Curtis, 276
Lang, Andrew, 207
Langford, Lord ("Paddy"), 194
Lansdowne, Lord (3rd Marquis), 29
Lascelles, Sir Frank, 240
Léal, Mendez (South American financier), 56
Leblanc, Leonide (courtesan), 172, 254, 255
Lee, Sir Sidney, 16, 22, 25, 26
Lefevre, Mr. (of Chamant), 240
Lehon, Leopold, 61
Lennox, Henry, 149
Leo XIII, Pope, 58
Leopold, Prince, 21
Levert, M. (Prefect of Marseilles), 210
Lewis, Sam (moneylender), 259, 260
Lichnowsky, Prince Felix, 202
Lichtenstein, Colonel (Grévy's military secretary), 173
Ligne, Prince de, 103
Lincoln, Abraham, 212-220

Lincoln, Mrs. (wife of the President), 220
—— Robert (son of the President), 220
——Tad (son of the President), 220
Lipman, Isidore, 246
Lock, Miss (of Norbury Park), 65
Lombard, M. *See* Lefevre, Mr.
London, 29, 31, 41, 47, 60, 61, 95, 143, 144, 149, 154, 169
Long's Hotel, 119, 233
Louis XIV, 166
Louis XVIII, 51, 112, 139
Louis Philippe, 30, 51, 172, 188, 211
Louise, H.R.H. Princess, 231
Lumley, Augustus, 21, 154, 228
Lyons, Lord, 8, 14, 65, 212, 216, 219
Lytton, Lord (Owen Meredith), 277, 278

Machell, Captain, 88, 254
Madeleine, Boulevard de la, 123
Madrid, 40, 134, 165
Magnier, Edouard, 223
Magny's (in the Rue Contrescarpe), 117
Maillé, Duchesse de, 139, 140
Maison de France, 30
Malet, Sir Edward, 122
Malmesbury, Lord, 93
Manchester, Louise Duchess of, 25
Marguerite, Princess (the Duc de Chartres's second daughter), 45
Maria Theresa, Archduchess (wife of the Archduke Charles Louis), 156
Marie Amelia, Queen, 211
Marlborough Club, 169
—— House, 11, 142, 169
Marshall and Snelgrove, 262
Massa, Duc de, 45
Maupassant, Guy de, 277
May, Edward (portrait painter), 242
Medina Celi, Duchess of, 41
Melissano, Prince, 111
Mensdorff Pouilly, Count (the Austrian Ambassador), 202
Merode, Mgr. de, 185
Metternich, Prince, 54, 55
—— Princess Pauline, 76, 77, 155, 202, 235, 253
Meyer, Arthur, 114, 173, 223
Mignon, Rose (actress), 124, 125
Milan, King of Servia, 233-236
Miromesnil, Duc de, 67
Mirza Rahim Feranza (a Persian youth), 226-231
Mocquard, Jean F. C., 47, 61, 185. See also *Things I Shouldn't Tell.*
Mollerus, Baron, 202
Moltke, von, Count Helmuth, 72
Moniteur, the (periodical of 1814), 112

Montagu House, 134
—— Oliver (son of the Earl of Sandwich), 148, 149-151
Monte Carlo, 87, 173
Montespan, Mme. de, 29, 138
Montigny (Manager of the Gymnase), 143, 145
Montijo, Mme. de, 199, 256
Montmorency, Marechale Duchesse de, 41
—— Marshal Duc de, 42, 48
Montpensier, Duchesse de (sister of Queen Isabella II of Spain), 170
Mordaunt case, the, 27
Morgan, Junius (the banker), 274
—— the late Pierpont, 167, 274
Morley, Lord (1st Earl). See *East Lynne*
Morny, Duc de (bastard brother of Napoleon III), 29, 47, 49, 87, 92, 101, 144, 184, 238, 240
Morosini, General, 182, 183
Moskowa, Prince de la (Grand Veneur), 54, 114
Mouchy, Duchesse de, 99
Mudd, Dr. (assisted John Wilkes Booth to escape), 216
Muirhead, Steuart (Dick Steuart of the Blues), 148, 151. See also *Things I Shouldn't Tell*
Murat, Joachim (King of Naples), 29
—— Princess Anna. *See* Mouchy, Duchesse de

Napoleon III, Emperor of the French, 10, 29, 47, 49, 53, 54, 92, 93, 94, 106, 137, 139, 143
Napoleon, Eugène Louis, Prince Imperial, 53, 93
—— Prince (Plon Plon), 43, 78, 92, 93, 164, 165, 187, 209
Naquet, Alfred, 268
Narvaëz, Marshal, 198
Nathalie, Queen of Servia, 233
National Gallery, 141
Nelson, Horatio Viscount, Admiral, 194
—— Lady, 195
Nemours, Duc de, 30, 170
Nerville, Mme. Aubernon de, 82, 146
Newmarket, 254
New York, 111, 148, 172, 189, 197, 207
Nicolay, John G. (private secretary to Abraham Lincoln), 212, 219
Noailles, Sabine de (daughter of Mme. de Mouchy), 99. See also *Uncensored Recollections*
Nodier, Charles, 268

O'Connor, Mr. T. P., 260
Oldoini, Virginia. *See* Castiglione, Comtesse de
Oliphant, Laurence, 22, 102
Oliffe, Sir Joseph, 238
Omnium (the French St. Leger), 9, 162
Oppenheim (the German banker), 60, 63
Orleans House, 31

Osborne, Bernal, 154. See also *Uncensored Recollections* and *Things I Shouldn't Tell*
O'Shaughnessy, Arthur, 165
Our American Cousin (the play), 213
Oxford, 135

Padwick (a money lender), 261-265
Paget, Sir Arthur. See *East Lynne*
Paget, Lady Florence ("The Pocket Venus"), 262
Pailleron, Edouard, 38, 87, 147
Paix, Café de la, 67, 114, 245
Pall Mall, 141, 168, 169, 193
Palmerston, Lord, 93
Paris, 9, 13, 33, 40, 44, 53, 56, 81, 87, 96, 112, 114, 115, 118, 119, 122, 127, 129, 135, 137, 139, 141, 146, 154, 165, 173, 179, 186, 189, 196, 199
——Comte de, 30, 170
Payne, George, 15, 27, 192
Peabody, George (philanthropist), 197
Pearl, Cora, 222-225
Pender, Sir John, 276
Penthièvre, Duc de, 30
Persigny, Duc de, 47, 92, 101, 144, 187, 188. See also *Things I Shouldn't Tell*
Persigny, Mme. de, 234
Pius IX (the witty ex-soldier Pope), 120, 140
Plant, a labourer and a Plantagenet, 280
"Plon Plon" *See* Napoleon, Prince, also *Uncensored Recollections*
Poëze, Le Vicomte de la (famous duellist), 183, 185
Poilly, Mme. de, 99, 256
Poix, Prince de, 99
Polignac, Duchesse de 188
Polk, Miss (an American lady), 169
Ponsonby, Frederick (Lord Bessborough's brother), 193
Porges, Jules, 175
Portalis, Edouard, 112, 113
—— Harold, 216
Pozzo di Borgo, the old Duchesse, 140
Pradt, Abbé de, 112
Pratt, Tom, 115
Pryor, "Matt," 242
Pyncheon (an American professor), 95, 96

Quarterly Review, 33
Queensberry, Duke of (old Q), 168
"Qui qu'a vu Coco" (music-hall song), 177

Rassis, Major, 121-129
Rathbone, Major, 215
Ratibor, Duke, 103, 156

Reform Club, 141
Renan, Ernest, 75, 147, 209
René (head-waiter Café de la Paix), 67, 245
Reuss (the princely house of), 154
Richet, Dr., 115
Riggs, Mrs. Elisha, 241
Rivière, Arnaud de. *See* Schiavone
Roberts, Marshall O. (of New York), 196
Robertson, Miss Agnes (actress). *See* Boucicault, Mrs. Dion
Rochefort, Henri (French journalist and Marquis de Rochefort-Luçay), 163, 165, 167
Rochefoucauld, Stanislas de la, 106
Rocheguyon, Mademoiselle de la (a French peasant), 280
Rome, 120, 134, 182, 185
Romero (Spanish anarchist), 165
Romilly, Worms de (financier), 265
Ronalds, Mrs. 231
Rosebery, Lord, 14
Rossmore, Lord ("Rosey"), 152, 153
Rothschild, Baron Alphonse de, 68, 175, 190
—— Baron Nathaniel de, 155
—— Baron Edmond de, 186
—— Baron James de, 54, 114, 189, 200, 202, 265
—— Leopold, 154, 175
—— Mme. Alphonse de, 68, 79, 175. See also *Uncensored Recollections*
Rouher, Eugène, 54
Rous, Admiral Henry, 193, 194
Roussel, Prosper, 163
Rouville, Marquis de (nicknamed the Mouche du Coche), 61
Rowles, Miss, 48
Rudge (the Court jeweller), 168
Rue Royale Club, 162
Rustem Pasha, 32, 122
Rutland Arms, Newmarket, 254

Saffery (the bookmaker), 9
Sagan, Prince de, 200
—— Princess de, 27, 111
Sainte-Beuve, C. A. de, 145, 147
Saint-Charmond (an extinct family), 166
Saint-Didier, Mme. de, 33, 35, 46
St. Denis, cathedral of, 53
St. Germain, Faubourg, 138
St. Len, Comte de, 55
Salamanca (the Jew banker of Madrid), 56, 59, 60, 61, 62. See also *Uncensored Recollections*, 57, 134
Sancy de Parabère, Mme. de, 100
Sand, Georges, 145, 209
Sandwich, the late Lord, 158

Sardou, Victorien, 69, 84, 86, 87
Scheffer, Ary, 211
Schege, Paul, 245
Schiavone (notorious Neapolitan bandit), 246
Schneider, Hortense, 253
Schwartzenberg, Mme. Lori, 202
—— Prince (Loulou), 12
Schweinitz, German Ambassador in Petersburg, 45
Séchelles, Hérault de, 188
Seillière, Baron (father of Princesse de Sagan), 266
——, —— Raymond, 131. See also *Uncensored Recollections* and *Things I Shouldn't Tell*
Seymour, Admiral Sir Beauchamp, 154
Sforza, Count, 247
Shah of Persia (Nasser-ed-deen), 226
Sheffield, George, 65, 126, 205, 222
Siamese Twins, 19
Signoret, Fanny (a *demi-mondaine*), 235
Silvestre, Armand, 277
Simon, Jules, 54
Singer, Mr. (of sewing-machine fame), 243, 144
Skittles, Polly (a courtesan), 62
Soubeyran, Baron, 62
Spencer, Herbert, 139
Spoelberch de Lovenjoui, Vicomte (friend of Doche), 145
Stackelberg, Comte de, 266
Stafford House, 134
—— Lord. *See* Sutherland, Duke of
Stevens, Mrs. Paran (mother of the late Lady (Arthur) Paget), 121
Stowe, Mrs. Harriet Beecher (novelist), 135
Sully, Mounet, 177-179
Sumner, Charles (American statesman), 65
Surratt, Mrs. (John Wilkes Booth's accomplice), 216
Sutherland, Duchess of, 52
—— the late Duke of, 153, 221
Swinburne, Algernon Charles, 165, 205, 270

Taffanel, Claude Paul (the flautist), 80
Talleyrand (Charles Maurice Talleyrand-Périgord), 53, 113
Talleyrand-Périgord, Dorothy Comtesse de, 201
Talon, the late Marquis, 254
Tamberlick, Enrico, 85
Teck, Prince Francis of, 111
Teesdale, Colonel Christopher, 21, 157, 158
Tennyson, Alfred Lord, 267, 271
Thackeray, W. M., 31, 281
Théo "La Jolie Parfumeuse," 9
Thérèsa (Emma Valadon, the songstress), 77-80
Thiers, Louis Adolphe, 34, 37
Things I Shouldn't Tell, 29, 119, 226, 253

Thompson, Lydia, 64
—— Sir Henry, 49
Tiffany, Louis (a rich American), 173
Torlonia (the banker), 120
Tournon, Mlle. de, 96, 97, 98, 165
Townley, Dick, 153
Tranby Croft, 28
Travellers' Club, 193
Trémoille, Duc de la, 138
Trochu, Louis Jules, 38
Trouville, 36, 54, 239
Truefitt (the barber), 167
Tuileries, 61, 78, 199, 211
Tyndall, Professor John, 206

Uncensored Recollections, 59, 70, 75, 121, 142, 148, 154, 156, 157, 161, 162, 226, 233

Valtesse (authoress and *demi-mondaine*), 114, 256-258
Verdi, Giuseppe (composer), 69
Veron, Dr. (Mimi, as he was called), 62
Victoria, Queen, 14, 17, 19, 24, 52, 109, 110, 111, 152, 159, 228
Vidocq, François (detective), 128
Vienna, 12, 113, 154, 202

Wallscourt, Lord ("Chuck" of the Coldstream Guards), 64, 65
Walsingham, Lord, 182, 184
Wantage, Lord, 161
War, the Great, 134
Ward, Lord (afterwards 1st Earl of Dudley), 89, 90
Warr, Lord De La, 193
Warwick, Lady, when Lady Brooke, 28
Washington Embassy, 65
Westminster, Duchess of, 135
Westmorland, Lady, 278
Weyer, Mr. Van der (diplomatist), 159
"What was Said in the Boudoir" (a poem), 278
Whitman, Walt, 216
Williams, Colonel Owen ("Ducky" of the Blues), 110
—— Colonel (of Kars), 158
—— Montagu, 260
Wilson, Daniel, 253
Winchester, the 15th Lord, 192
Windsor, 19, 149, 151, 152
—— races, 152
Witley, 89, 91, 97
Wombwell, Sir George, 194
Wood, Mrs. Henry, 281
Wood, Norton, 35, 41
Woodds, Basil, 120

Worth (the dressmaker), 73

Yates, Edmund, 165
Yorke, Eliot, 116, 161
Ypsilanti, Prince, 82, 83

Zamorn (the villainous Creole), 168
Zucco, Cicily, 43